



*Sincerely & gratefully yours*  
*Fred W Robertson*



HEcc)E.D  
R [Brooke, Stopford Augustus ed.]

# LIFE, LETTERS,

## LECTURES, AND ADDRESSES

OF

FREDK. W. <sup>William</sup> ROBERTSON, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON,  
1847-1853.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.



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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

FREDK. W. ROBERTSON, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON, 1847-53.

EDITED BY

STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A.,

HONORARY CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.



## INTRODUCTION.

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THE "Life and Letters of Frederick W. Robertson" has now been two years before the public, and has passed through four editions. It is hoped that the present edition will bring the book into contact with a larger circle of readers. The matter is in all essential respects identical with that of the original two volumes. No abbreviations have been made; a few alterations only in the arrangement of the letters seemed advisable, and a few additional notes have been inserted. Not one of the letters has been omitted; on the contrary, a few are added, which have come to hand since 1865.

The rapid sale of the previous editions proves the undiminished interest of the public in Mr. Robertson's life and character. The testimony of the reviews to the influence and value of his teaching, whether in sermons or letters, has been generous and comprehensive. Nor has this been confined to those who are in harmony with the tone of his mind, or agree with his opinions. A tolerance, a just weight given to his life, as distinguished from his theological views—a desire to find out the good and not the evil in the man whom they, nevertheless, oppose as a teacher, have marked the generality of the Evangelical, Anglican, and Dissenting reviews. It is pleasant to feel how much in twelve years the tone of criticism has altered for the better. There have been, with two miserable exceptions, no senseless imputations of infidelity or rationalism, no implied slander, no attempts to push forward "the truth" by depreciating or staining Mr. Robertson's character. The educated and gentlemanly partisans of that school which most strongly opposes Mr. Robertson's theology have spoken of him with kindness and Christian charity. Of those who have reversed this mode of action I need not speak. The Ethiopian can not change his skin.

It has seemed to me, in sending out this book in the form in which it will probably continue permanent, that this is the fitting place to speak of a few of the more salient criticisms which have been made upon the biography and its subject.

It has been said by some critics that there is no adequate account given in this book of the "extraordinary" alteration in Robertson's opinions which took place at Cheltenham. But there was very little to record till the moment of change arrived. Like all radical changes, it was the product of numberless small, and in themselves unnoticeable things—passing conversations, passing events, slight shocks, the books he read, the reflex action of his sermons on his own mind, and the set which the current of his thoughts took under the general influences I have described in the text. It was a great

change, but not greater than that which occurs again and again in the history of men who are forced to win faith out of doubt. It seems sudden and unexpected, but in reality it extended over three or four years. It is because we do not see the steps which led to it, and because its crisis came in a moment—that it appears to be extraordinary. But it was no more extraordinary than is the rapid development of a plant when it is removed from a soil unsuited to it into one entirely congenial to its nature. It may be said that it is this very process of removing on which information is required, and little or none given in the biography. The fact is, all that could be given was given. There were no diaries of his feelings kept by Mr. Robertson. There were no letters written during that period which could be used. Those who knew him best seem to have known little about the workings of his mind, and all that they knew has been embodied in the biography. It was a slow and insensible growth—and I do not think he was conscious himself of its full meaning till just before the crisis came.

Moreover, even had he written diaries at that time of his spiritual life—had he dissected himself in these, and watched hour by hour the progress of his soul, and recorded it—I would not have given it to the world. It is a diseased state of the public mind which demands to look into the heart of a man and to see it in all its nakedness; and nothing would have induced me to gratify this morbid curiosity. There are persons who wish to have every thing explained to them with mathematical precision—even the secret progress of the soul. I am glad not to have satisfied such persons, and if I could I would not have satisfied them.

The "Record" newspaper, to which my thanks are due for the striking confirmation which its review has given to Robertson's severe judgment of its mission and spirit, has brought against me two charges of inaccuracy. It contradicts my declaration that it had reasserted, after Robertson's death, a charge of socialistic opinions against him. In reply, I quote the passage on which my opinion was founded ("Record" newspaper, December 27, 1853). "It will be remembered that Mr. Maurice, Mr. Kingsley, the late Mr. Robertson of Brighton, Mr. Ross, and others of the same school, were all mixed up, a few years ago, with schemes of Christian Socialism." Captain Robertson sent two indignant denials of this charge to the "Record." They were inserted January 5th and January 12th, 1854; and the letter of the latter date was accompanied by an introduction, in which the editor states that the wrong done to Mr. Robertson, and complained of by his father, was "purely imaginary." It was not so at least to Captain Robertson, nor, as it seems, was it altogether so to the "Record;" for in its first review of Robertson's Life there occur these words: "In the beginning of 1854, we received a long letter from Captain Robertson, defending his son from the charge of socialism, *implied in a short paragraph*, in which he was named as having been associated with Maurice and Kingsley." The words I have italicized are a sufficient answer to the "Record's" accusation of inaccuracy. They prove, from its own columns, that if the charge of socialism was not defined, it was at least implied. Every one knows the way in which the "Record" does its work; and in this

case, even after inserting Captain Robertson's two letters of contradiction, it managed, in a comment upon them, to imply the charge over again. "We trust," it says, "on the contrary, that he (Mr. Robertson) was saved from falling into the abyss of error round which he seemed to sport, and that, whilst numbered with Christian Socialists," etc., etc.

The second charge of inaccuracy is thus expressed: "It is another of Mr. Brooke's strange blunders to insert two letters from Mr. Maurice, which he alleges, without inquiry and contrary to fact, to have been 'part of a correspondence published in the columns of the "Record."'" I reply, that I am right, and the "Record" wrong. The two letters from Mr. Maurice *did* appear in the "Record," January 12, 1854.

Robertson has been accused of that which is called "negative theology." No accusation can possibly be further from the truth. If he spoke strongly against views, in his opinion erroneous, he never did so without bringing forward a positive view on the subject, lest men should be left with a soul empty, swept, and garnished. His continual effort to bring into clear light the living spirit of dogmas, forms, and even of errors, marks the positive character of his teaching. Above all, he insisted on the historical reality of the Life of Christ. He preached those facts as the foundation of all spiritual life; and he held that with the loss of the reality of the incarnation, the childhood, the temptation, the daily life, the miracles, the death, and the resurrection of Christ, we should lose Christianity. In this he differed, *ab initio*, from all forms of negative theology; and, at the same time, it resulted from the same antecedent that he differed from every form of theology which seeks to reduce all minds to one mode of doctrinal conception. For he rested on a life, not on a system. He did not deny the necessity of a system of theology, but he did deny the necessary permanence of any system. Christianity was founded on a Life, the spirit of which was infinite, and capable of infinite expansion. It would, therefore, be necessarily born again and again under new forms, conditioned by the character and thought of the several countries and ages it existed in. But all this continuance, under diverse forms, of Christianity, depended, in Robertson's mind, on the historical reality of Christ's person and Christ's life.

Probably, had he been asked what he thought of the "negative theology," which has now intruded upon the skirts of liberal theology, he would have quoted Goethe's words as an answer: "Every work of opposition is a negative work, and a negation is a non-entity. When I have called the bad bad, have I gained much by that? But if, by chance, I have called the good bad, I have done a great wrong. He who wishes to have a useful influence on his time ought to insult nothing. Let him not trouble himself about what is absurd, let him consecrate all his activity on this—on the bringing to light of new good things. He is bound not to overthrow, but to build up."

I have quoted these wise words, because they express as clearly as possible one of the fundamental tones of Robertson's mind, and one of the chief characteristics of his teaching. It was part of his work, then, to assimilate within himself all that was true in all parties, and

to exhibit the truth of which any error was a perversion by bringing it face to face with the error. There is a noble passage in Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, where the false Florimell, who had been formed of "purest snow in massy mould congealed," and whom "a wicked spright, yfraught with fawning guyle," inhabited—the snow signifying the coldness, lifelessness, and slippery nature of all false representations of any truth or beauty: and the guileful spirit—the seducing nature of untruth in the garb of truth—is at last brought face to face with the true and living Florimell, "like the true saint beside the image set," and how then the "enchanted damzell vanished into nought." It is a picture of Robertson's mode of dealing with false representations of doctrinal or moral truth. He brought them face to face with the real truths they counterfeited. His teaching has had the effect of extending far beyond its usual sphere this mode of action, out of which alone a true toleration can arise, and the result has been the establishing on a wider basis of the idea of the necessary manifoldness of Christian thought which it is so important to keep before our eyes, and which we are always in danger of losing. There is even among those who call themselves Liberal Churchmen a tendency towards an intolerant denunciation and scorn of those whom they think less advanced than themselves. This is striking at the very keystone of the arch of their building, and, if the blows of this intolerance are continued, the result will be as fatal to the Liberal as it has been already to other parties in the Church. This sort of work is making them into a mere party; and the moment a movement in the Church becomes, in essence, a party movement, it receives the seeds of death. The liberal school will be productive and powerful as long as every man in it is not so bound down by the exigencies of party as to lose that individuality, independence of thought, freedom of development, and variety of character and teaching, which make at present the special strength of this school of theological thought. Liberal theologians ought to see and allow, if they would make their toleration perfect and gradually win their opponents to their side, that at present a certain class of minds can not approach God except through the channel of Evangelicalism, and another only through the channel of High-Churchism, just as these classes, in their turn, should see that the more modern form of theology is necessary as a means of arriving at God to another cast of mind and character. It is this union in diversity which ought to be seized as the first principle of a Church, and to the reception of this principle Robertson's teaching, in spite of his intolerance of a certain type of evangelicalism, directly tended, and is tending.

I may mention, in connection with the above, that those evangelicals who repudiate with pain the "Record" as their exponent, have complained that Mr. Robertson did not do justice to them, that he speaks of them in an unchristian manner, and that I have disfigured the pages of the *Biography* by exhibiting a hatred of Evangelicalism.

With regard to myself, I have consistently refrained from doing that which has been imputed to me. I have known too many noble workers and Christian warriors belonging to that school to speak of it with hatred. I confess that I abhor the spirit in which the "Rec-



ord" and its followers and admirers strive to defend their position of infallibility and persecution, and I think it the very spirit of the devil; but I equally hate that spirit when it is manifested by any school, Anglican, Tractarian, or Liberal. I do not abhor it because it may belong to this or that party—I abhor it because it is the contradiction and the enemy of Christianity; and I inserted that letter of Robertson's which has been so much spoken of, because I believed that the fierce language he used was well deserved, and I hoped that it would cling—because he was there attacking not religious feelings or intellectual error in doctrine, but a base and lying spirit, and that to brand it with a name which expressed its infamy was clearly a righteous act. But I should as soon have thought of confounding all Evangelicalism with the "Record" as I should have thought of confounding all Christianity with denunciation of the religious opinions of others. It is true I have said that Evangelicalism had a weakening effect upon Robertson, and that when he escaped from it he sprang from a dwarf into a giant, and I suppose it is the extreme truth of that—it lies on the surface—which has irritated these critics. But they have quite mistaken me. I do not hold that Evangelicalism has a weakening effect upon all men. It would be ridiculous to say that their system enfeebled such men as Scott, Wilberforce, or Venn. On the contrary, it strengthened them, and they could not have done their work in an atmosphere of Liberal theology. But Robertson was differently constituted. That air which they breathed easily choked Robertson, and change of air gave him life, power, and mental energy. I spoke of the effect of Evangelicalism not on all men, but on *this* man, and to accuse me of intolerance in stating a fact of this kind is like accusing an Englishman of insular exclusiveness because he says that he could not live with any pleasure under the irritating, daily restrictions of French Imperialism.

With regard to Robertson himself, I have always felt, and I have stated it, that he showed scant justice to the Evangelical School. He undervalued their efforts, and he did not allow sufficient merit to their theology. It was the only exception to his large and healthy tolerance. But he was a man and not an angel, and I never attempted to exhibit him as superhumanly perfect. There are few who arrive at faultless tolerance, and those who do often do so from a defectiveness in their nature of noble anger and enthusiasm. I confess I would, in many cases, rather keep the latter, with the spice of intolerance which distills from it, than, in losing the intolerance, find the man afflicted with a rigid prudence and a cold indifference. Moreover, Robertson had, as I have said, some excuse. In London, and in great towns, the poison of religious virulence is diluted by the multitude of opinions—in the country the distance at which clergymen live from one another disperses the venom. But in places like Cheltenham and Brighton it is concentrated, and Robertson being almost alone, with one or two exceptions who were passive, found it coming drop by drop upon his head. It is scarcely in human nature not to feel indignant and sometimes to let loose one's indignation, and it is not unnatural, as in Robertson's case, to fall into the mistake that the spirit he suffered from in Brighton was the characteristic spirit of the school which was foremost in the attack upon him.

The criticism which the Dissenting reviews have given to Robertson's career has been uniformly generous, and marked by a fresh and intellectual appreciation of his life and work. This generosity is the more remarkable, because Robertson used now and then somewhat strong expressions about Dissenters in his recoil from their want of union, and from their consequent loss of power.

On looking back upon the last few years, and seeking for the results which have flowed from Robertson's sermons, and from the publication of his letters, perhaps the greatest is the extension of liberal religious thought among those who would not have received it from any other man. It has filtered into the minds of thousands who would refuse to read the works of others of the Liberal school, but who can not help reading Robertson. His teaching, for example, is largely modifying Evangelicalism, because the higher Evangelicalism is capable of modification. In Ireland, and especially in Dublin, Robertson has had a very decided influence upon the preaching of many of the clergymen. In England, I have heard from every quarter of men of anti-liberal tendencies being changed—the whole basis of their theological thinking altered—by the reading of his sermons. It is not difficult to find the reason of this. The fault of most of the sermons of the Liberal school is a want of emotion. They are often, too, purely efforts of the intellect. Often they want fervor—personal enthusiasm for Christ, pietistic warmth—appeals to the heart. In one word, they want the very element which made the sermons of the early Evangelicals tell so forcibly upon their hearers. Now Robertson possessed this fervent emotional piety, and he had derived it from his early connection with Evangelicalism. Such men as Simeon, Newton, and others had an almost mystical ardor of devotion, from which Robertson had drunk deeply. This was increased in him by his eager reading of such sermons as those of Newman and Manning, who were as fervent as Simeon and Martyn upon another side of Christian feeling. His early sermons exhibit a passionate exaltation of religious emotion, in which thought and logic are all but consumed in love. Afterwards, when he changed, this element remained in him beneath his intellectual work, and made it warm and glowing; and it is owing to the subtle and insensible influence of this Evangelical element, that he has crept into the hearts of so many of that school, and introduced into their teaching the leaven of liberal theology.

I do not find that Robertson has had any wide-spread influence upon the High-Church party. This party is far more rigid in its system than the Evangelical, and though more tolerant in words, is less inclined to real toleration. The Evangelicals have the natural intolerance which accompanies a strictly dogmatic system, but the High-Church party have not only dogmatic intolerance, but, in addition, priestly intolerance. Robertson's views on the nature of the Priesthood and on the nature of the Sacraments shut him out completely from the sphere of the High-Churchmen. They always speak of him kindly, and with gentlemanly forbearance, but they reject him utterly and with rigid logic from any union with them. While ready with a somewhat patronizing dignity to admit of his life having claims on their admiration, they are too firmly wedded to their

ecclesiastical theory, which Robertson repudiated, to permit his influence to affect them.

On the more advanced school of liberal theologians Robertson has also had very little influence. He is not radical enough in his views. He is not fond enough of destroying. He has too little to do with the intellectual side of Christianity, and too much to do with the emotional, for their pleasure. They wonder at his being so widely read. They admire his genius, reverence his life, but they find his theology weak and behind the age. They do not seem to understand that the generality of men really want for life, not an intellectual but a heartfelt religion; and that it is because Robertson has given them the latter, in conjunction with a fair amount of liberal thought and of culture, that he has become the cherished companion, in his sermons and letters, of so large a mass of their countrymen. For it is not so much on declared followers of any particular school that Robertson has had the widest influence. It is upon that numerous class of men who are weary of going to church at all, who exist apart from any distinct denomination, who wish to be religious, but who have turned away, sick at heart, from religions, that Robertson's teaching has told with the greatest effect.

Whether this influence will be permanent or not, is another question. One portion of it will, I am sure, be permanent; that portion which bears on the moral life and spiritual being of men. To all in spiritual difficulty, in doubt or in trouble, to all whom sorrow has touched or whom suffering has enfeebled, to all those spirits whose sensitive organization has made life so subtle in its varieties of feeling, so difficult to live, owing to the various aspects in which to such persons both action and thought present themselves, he will always be the comforter and the guide of the way to the highest comfort. To all who are perplexed with casuistry, with the solution of peculiar cases of moral action in which two duties appear to clash, or in which of two duties the highest is to be discovered and chosen; to all who wish, by the accurate performance of the smallest duties of life, to reach the starting-point of the higher life where Christ replaces the law in our hearts by the Gospel, and coerced obedience to the moral law is succeeded by the willing obedience which love renders to a righteous Father, Robertson will always be a helper and a director. But considered only as a theological teacher, I doubt if his influence will be permanent. I do not see how it can last, in the rapid advance of the river of religious thought in England.

I will try, in conclusion of this introduction, to mark as distinctly as possible Robertson's theological position. He represents the transition period of the theological movement of this century in England. He was partly a prophet of the old, partly of the new. Hence he is a favorite with all those minds who in this age of inquiry have not determined their position. The religious Radical, while admiring his religious thinking, looks down upon his theological teaching. The defined High-Churchman and Evangelical adopt the same position. The true Liberal clearly recognizes Robertson's position and work, but at the same time holds that to fix himself into another man's mould when time and knowledge are advancing, would deny not only the necessity of progress, but even the princi-

ples on which Robertson insisted. But there are thousands, on as it were a kind of theological bridge, to whom Robertson's teaching is dear, and whom he helps to see their position. Representing, as he did, the transitional period some time before it appeared, these men find themselves reflected in him. Some of them cross over to the bank of Liberal Theology, others return to the shore they had left. He has helped them to find certainty of opinion, not only by showing them to themselves, but by the whole drift of his moral teaching, which above all else urges men to be true to their convictions.

Again, his spiritual life, itself travelling through so many phases, has an attraction for such men. They see their own fluctuations there, and either pass on with him to his secure position, or go back, finding that they can not accept his conclusions. As long as this large section of men, who are unsettled, exists, Robertson's influence as a theological teacher will endure. But the moment a man, having used Robertson thus as a means of determining his position, becomes a declared Liberal, or retires into the opposite ranks, Robertson, as a theological teacher, though not as an ethical or religious teacher, ceases to be of any use to him. Therefore, when Liberal Christianity, assisted as it is by the march of social, scientific, and political events, becomes the regnant form of Christianity among the educated classes in England, Robertson will cease to possess his present wide-spread influence as a theologian. Nevertheless, he will always be read. As a theological teacher, he will always be useful at that point of an inquiring man's religious life when his opinions are floating in solution.

At the time of his death, High-Churchmen tried to claim Robertson as tending to their views. Since his death Evangelical reviewers have declared that he would have returned, if he had lived, to their orthodox fold. So much devotion, such love of Christ has seemed to them quite inexplicable in one who was wandering on the dark mountains of skepticism. But such a return would have been impossible to Robertson. The principles which formed the very back-bone of his mind were in direct opposition to principles which have been very generally enunciated in the late discussions; such as the assumed infallibility of the Bible on all questions; the necessity of stifling doubt; the repression of all who stir up theological discussions; the duty of keeping strictly in the old paths; the habits of shutting the eyes to difficulties, and of answering opponents without the requisite knowledge; the denial of the development of doctrine and of religious progress, and the general depreciation, as an evil to be dreaded, of active and critical inquiry. In none of these things could Robertson have concurred. He liked war and excitement. He believed in progress. He had no fear of God's truth being overwhelmed. To him Christianity could not be in danger. I do not think he could have breathed in an atmosphere of obstinate theological optimism. It was not stir, or inquiry, or skepticism which he feared, but unrelenting conservatism and stagnation; and there are few who will not believe that he was right, few who will not declare, in spite of all our divisions and troubles, that the Church is in a healthier condition than it was twenty years ago—

who will not hope, taking the very excitement as the ground of the hope, that the Church is advancing towards that condition of well-established health which is characterized by the possession, not of the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. A writer in the "*Revue des deux Mondes*" of February 1, 1867, says: "Should you ask now what is the present condition of Christianity in France, I answer, look at the two opposed camps where a remnant of life exists, one for the attack, the other for the defense of the Christian faith. Then look beyond these two camps, and what do you see remaining? An innumerable crowd, inert, inanimate, a veritable Dead Sea in which no living being dwells. That is the world you must reconquer. This 'insouciance—torpeur—engourdissement' of the souls of men—this is the wound which is eating into our society—this is the real disease of the age." Now it is this state which this writer so deplures, from which we in England, at least, are rescued. We live in a world of religious excitement, from the highest to the lowest ranks. We are going through a religious revolution, and it is not impossible that we shall manage it with as much wisdom as we managed in 1688 our political revolution. "It is not very long ago," says another French writer, whom I quote from memory, "since some sentimental politicians discovered the model empire in China. They contrasted Europe torn with theological disputes—rent asunder with wars and revolutions—laboring like a ship in a hurricane, with the quiet national life and the uninterrupted paradise of peace which for centuries had prevailed in China. But what is the true view? China is dying of prolonged infancy. Europe is still full of life—of faith in the future—of belief in itself."

If we insist on reducing the Church to the standard of China, it will die, and deserve to die; if we accept, as necessary elements of the Church in the age in which we live, the excitement, controversy, criticism, revolutionary opinions which are now disturbing us, and set ourselves to find means of bringing order out of disorder, we shall step soon into a more vigorous existence than ever. I am certain that would have been Robertson's opinion. I shall not readily forget the fervor with which I heard him read, "Ring in the Christ which is to be."

No one holding such principles could have found a home in Evangelicalism, or have retired into that High-Church system which holds that the Christianity—and practice and ritual—of the past are better than those of the present or the future. I am far from depreciating the noble and honorable work which the two conservative parties in the English Church have done, and may yet do. There are principles at the root of Ritualism, or rather lying hidden in it, which it would be a misfortune to the Church to lose, and which will probably, as time goes on, shake off the mists of error which now conceal them, and come forth into clear light to help forward the march of Christianity. There are hopes, and I think with good grounds, that the large Evangelical party in the Church will soon, if it has not done it already, take up more liberal ground and revive into a Liberal-conservative condition. This is earnestly to be desired, for it is most important that there should be a strong opposi-

tion to prevent the Liberal theologians from going too fast for Christian safety. But one thing at least is necessary for the existence of such an opposition—that it should allow that theology has not reached its ultimate expression, and that it should reserve its strength, not to oppose all extension of theology, but only an unconsidered, hasty, and unwise extension. Theology is not Christianity, it is the scientific exposition of Christianity; and to declare that it is now perfect is to degrade it from the ranks of all true sciences, which are always relative, perfectible, and therefore can not be delivered to man in a moment. Those who say that no higher views of truth can be given or discovered by theology, say that we have exhausted the meaning of the words of Christ—tantamount to the absurdity of saying that we have exhausted the Infinite—and make of theology, not the temple, but the sepulchre of the human mind.

To views such as I have expressed in these latter pages the whole of Robertson's teaching tended. Those who embark upon the river of his thought, and do not leave it, are carried out into this sea. It has its dangers, its quicksands, its deceitful currents; and it needs, especially now, wary sailing and good pilots, but it ought to be a subject of earnest thought whether it is better to be sailing there, on to something better in the Infinite, or riding at anchor in a tranquil, land-locked bay.

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THERE would seem to be no apology necessary for presenting to the public the Life and Letters of FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON.

The abiding influence of his published writings on all those readers who are capable of being interested in spiritual questions and in Christian experience, has awakened in them a desire to know more of his career.

Constant allusions made in the public press and in reviews to his pre-eminence as a preacher, the wide diffusion of his sermons not only over this kingdom, but also over part of the Continent and of America, the interest in his teaching, which now (more than twelve years after his death) is increasing rather than diminishing, have led men to ask whether his life corresponded to the ideal pictured in his writings—whether his private letters would be worthy comparisons of his public utterances.

The friends who lived with him and loved him—his congregation, and especially those working-men of Brighton with whom he was connected—have long and eagerly wished to have some record of his life.

Those, on the other hand, who knew him not, but who, since his death have learned to reverence him as their teacher—who have found in his sermons a living source of impulse, a practical direction of thought, a key to many of the problems of theology, and, above all, a path to spiritual freedom—these, with an amount of feeling rarely given to one personally unknown, have hoped to possess some more intimate memorial of him, without whose life they had not lived.

For these reasons this book has been undertaken.

The publication of Mr. Robertson's letters was considered to be of great importance. They seemed to add a personal interest to his sermons, to explain fully his mode of thought, to indicate the source and progress of many of his views, and to supplement his general teaching. They are full of tender human thought, of subtle and delicate feeling, and of much tried and suggestive experience.

They possess, also, in common with his sermons, a peculiar literary interest. This interest lies not so much in the originality of their ideas as in the mode in which these ideas are represented. The choice of words in them is remarkable. There is sometimes a happy indefiniteness which belongs to and which suggests the infinite nature of the things discussed. A spirit pervades them which influences unconsciously their reader, and renders him receptive of their truths, by inducing in him a kindred tone of heart. Even Robert-

son's slight sketches of an idea, traced perhaps in a single sentence, contain the materials for a finished composition. If he is not a creator, he is eminently a lucid interpreter of thought. It is in this power of apt, logical, and striking expression that the chief *literary* interest of his writings consists.

I can not but believe also that the noble, truthful life he lived, and the "very courageous" battle which he fought, will have an influence as real and as helpful as his sermons.

The inadequacy with which this life has been represented can not be more a subject of regret to his friends than it is to myself. The fault can only, perhaps, be pardoned for the sake of the love and reverence with which the following pages have been written.

I have to thank many of his friends, and especially his father, Captain Robertson, for their assistance and advice.

I wish to draw attention to the interesting letters written from the Tyrol to Mrs. Robertson, and collected in the first Appendix, and to those from some of his friends which are inserted in the text and in the second Appendix.\*

In conclusion, I must regret the delay in the appearance of this book. It is due partly to my absence from England, but chiefly to my desire to make the collection of Mr. Robertson's letters as complete as possible. The arrival of new matter has often compelled me to recast whole chapters, and I have waited for months in the hope of obtaining an important correspondence, and found, at last, my hope in vain.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

LONDON, *Sept.* 15, 1865.

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\* In this edition incorporated with the body of the work.



# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

Birth of F. W. Robertson.—Childhood.—Love of Nature.—Character as a Boy at the Academy in Edinburgh.—Youthful Interests.—Choice of Profession.—Military Enthusiasm.—Studies for the Indian Service.—Circumstances which led him into the Church.—Enters Oxford.—Contact with Tractarianism.—Religious Views and Christian Effort.—Reading.—Arnold and Wordsworth.—Speaking at “the Union.”—His Opinion as to the Position of a Popular Preacher.—Two Letters recalling his College Life.—Ferment of his Mind at Oxford.—Letter expressing his Opinion of the Tract School and his Desire for a Military Chaplaincy.—Examination for Degree.—He Studies for Ordination.—Letters reviewing the Position of the English Church..... Page 24

*Letter*

*Letters from May, 1838, to June, 1840.*

I. Reading.—Oxford Donnishness.....	46
II. Desire for the Coming of Christ.....	47
III. Conversation with an “Infidel”.....	47
IV. Separation from his Brother.....	48
V. Anticipations of the Difficulties of the Ministry.....	48
VI. To a Friend whose Birthday approached.....	49
VII. Farewell to Oxford.....	50

## CHAPTER II.

Passage from Collegiate to Active Life.—Growth of his Christian Faith.—Early Sadness of his Heart.—Ordination.—Curacy at Winchester.—First Appearance in the Pulpit.—Difficulties of his Work.—Letter recalling his Life in Winchester.—Success as a Minister.—Description of him by a Friend.—Spiritual Life.—Devotional Reading.—Prayer.—Preaching.—Despondency arising from Illness.—Examination for Priest’s Orders.—Close of Ministerial Life at Winchester.—Continental Tour.—Geneva and its Parties..... 51

*Letters from September 17, 1840, to August 3, 1841.*

VIII. On first entering the Ministry.....	67
IX. To his Brother, on his Work.....	67
X. To a Friend, on the same Subject.....	68
XI. Justification by Faith.....	68
XII. Aspiration after greater Self-devotion.....	68
XIII. Geneva; Discussion with M. Malan on “Assurance”—with M—— on the Deity of Christ.....	69

## CHAPTER III.

Marriage.—Death of his Sister.—He takes the Curacy of Christ Church, Cheltenham.—Character and Influence of his Preaching.—His Despondency and its Causes.—His Influence in Society.—His Conversation.—His daring Character.—His Reading.—Extracts and Letter throwing Light on his Spiritual Development.—Influences which contributed to the Change in his Opinions.—Progress of this Change.—Its Crisis.—He leaves Cheltenham for the Continent..... 70

Letter

Letters during his Journey.

XIV. Arrival at Innspruck.—Description of his Feelings.—Tomb of Hofer.—Chamois-Hunting.—Lassitude of Heart and Restlessness.—Walk to Botzen.....	Page 87
XV. Account of Mental Difficulties.—Struggle after Truth.—In the "thickest Darkness" hold fast to Moral Good.—Perplexity as to the Ministry.—Heidelberg.....	89
XVI. Résumé of the Crisis of Thought through which he was passing.....	91
Correspondence with Mrs. Robertson.....	91
1. Munich and Rubens.—The Journey to Innspruck.—Loveliness of the Valley of the Inn.—Influence of Beauty on a troubled Heart.—Hofer.....	93
2. Color in the Fir Woods.—Impressions of the Tyrolese and their Religion.—Storm clouds in the Pass of Ampezzo.—Walk to Corfara.—Magnificent View.....	94
3. First Impressions do not return; Record them at once.—The Shepherd's Inn.—The Dolomite Mountains.—Botzen.....	96
4. Tyrolese Character and Religion.—Religious Superstitious Reverence.—Dislike of English Travellers of the Germans.—I Travel as a Duty, not for Pleasure.....	97
5. The Stelvio.—Love of Solitude.—Scene alluded to in the Lectures on Poetry.—Wood Logs in the Torrent.....	98
6. The Falls at Schaffhausen by Day and Night.—"I have bad Dreams"....	99
7. Heidelberg.—View from the Terrace.....	100
8. Decision with respect to Curacy of Christ Church.—Openness to Sympathy.—Plans for the Future.....	100
9. Disinclination for Ministerial Work.—Influence at Heidelberg over Socinians and others.—He is Encouraged and again Depressed.....	101

CHAPTER IV.

OXFORD.

Return to Cheltenham.—Surrender of Curacy of Christ Church.—He accepts the Charge of St. Ebbe's, Oxford.—Position in Relation to the High Church and the Evangelical Parties.—Results of his Work on the Parish of St. Ebbe's and on himself.—Trinity Chapel, Brighton, is offered to him.—He refuses, but afterwards accepts the offer.—Sad Presentiments..... 102

CHAPTER V.

BRIGHTON—1847, 1848.

Arrival at Brighton.—Trinity Chapel.—Death of his Infant Daughter.—Self-analysis and Resolutions on entering on his Ministry at Brighton.—First Sermon.—Characteristics of his Teaching.—Rapid Increase of his Congregation.—He is Appreciated by Servants and Working-men.—Wide Sphere of his Work at Brighton.—How he met the Questions raised by the Revolutions of 1848.—Afternoon Lectures on the First Book of Samuel.—Results of these Lectures.—He is accused to the Bishop of preaching Political Sermons.—His Reply.—Foundation of the Working-man's Institute.—He is asked to Deliver the Opening Lecture.—His Answer, and his Opinions on the Institution.—Delivery of the First Address.—His boldness of Speech.—Endeavor to reconcile Rich and Poor.—Qualifications which fitted him to be a Mediator..... 106

Letters from August 9, 1847, to January 5, 1849.

XVII. Reception of the "Address."—The Events of 1848.....	119
XVIII. Charge of Radicalism.—"Alone with Christ."—Grounds of the Brotherhood of the Race.—Pantheism.—"Baptism of John," and Baptism of the Spirit.—"That which calls itself Evangelicism".....	120
XIX. "The Wear and Tear" of ceaseless Preaching.....	122
XX. "Every one is not called upon to be a Martyr for Truth".....	123

CHAPTER VI.

BRIGHTON—1849.

His Interest in all the Questions which agitated Society.—Clairvoyance and Mesmerism.—Speech at the Meeting for the "Early Closing Association."—Opposition which was roused by his Preaching.—Work, and Hidden Life..... 123

*Letter*                      *Letters from January, 1849, to November, 1850.*

XXI. Reply to Strictures brought against a Sermon on the Suicide of Judas.....	Page 127
XXII. On the Death of a School Friend.....	131
XXIII. The Character of a Man is measured by the Poets whom he loves.....	132
XXIV. The true Means of developing our Human Nature.....	132
XXV. To a Friend about to become a Roman Catholic.....	133
XXVI. To the same.....	133
XXVII. To the same.....	134
XXVIII. Loneliness of Heart; but Loneliness with Christ.....	134

CHAPTER VII.

His Letters.—Complexity of his Character.—His Sensitiveness.—His Knowledge of Men.—His Life in Society.—Effect of Climate upon him.—Exquisite Perception of Natural Scenery.—Impressions received from Art, and how he used them.—Appreciation of Poetry.—Intensity of Enthusiasm and of Indignation.—His Eloquence and its Characteristics.—Hatred of the Reputation of a “Popular Preacher.”—The natural Morbidity and the dangerous Tendencies of his Character.—The Means he employed to conquer them.—His noble Truth and Self-devotion.—Causes of the Gloom which appears in his Letters..... 135

*Letters, August and September, 1849.*

XXIX. Fichte.—Life in the “Supersensuous” World.....	147
XXX. “My sins nailed Him to the Tree”.....	148
XXXI. Who are these who criticise my Sermons?.....	149
XXXII. “When I felt the Days before me”.....	149
XXXIII. Souvenirs.—Joy in Early Morning Air.—Beautiful Anrora.—Delight that a Friend had determined to solve the Mystery of Life.....	150
XXXIV. Evil of Desultory Reading.—Desultory Life.—Sacrificial Expression.—Fickleness.—Night on the Sea.....	153
XXXV. Effects of Suspicion on Character.—Is Prayer “of the Nature of a Charm?”—Where does the Inward Change begin?.....	154
XXXVI. A Character.....	156
XXXVII. Another Character.....	157
XXXVIII. “Is Sensibility to Sensuous Beauty necessary for the attainment of the Highest Excellence?”—The Sharpness of saying Farewell to half of One’s Being.....	158

CHAPTER VIII.

BRIGHTON, OCTOBER, 1849, TO DECEMBER, 1850.

Visit to Cheltenham.—New Interest in the Lives of others and in Ministerial Work.—Depression.—Great Intellectual Activity.—Afternoon Lectures on the Book of Genesis.—Gorham Case.—Sermons on Baptism, on the Sabbath, on the Atonement.—Virulent Opposition.—Solitary Position.—Summing up of his Life.—Internal Dissension in the Working-man’s Institute.—Proposition to admit Infidel Publications into the Library.—His Speech on the Occasion.—Its Meaning.—Its partial Success.—Reconstruction of the Association.—His Letters on the Subject.—Speech at the Meeting against the Papal Division of England into Dioceses.—Two Letters of Gratitude from Working-men..... 159

*Letters from October, 1849, to December, 1850.*

XXXIX. Miss Martineau’s “Feats on the Flord.”—Religious Superstitions.—Moments of Sacred Rest in Life.....	173
XL. Effect of Violent Tragedies, e.g. Phédre, on the Mind, also of Speculative Reading.....	174
XLI. Sabbath Observance.—Duty of Cheerfulness in Christian Life.....	175
XLII. The Blessing of the Lot of Woman.—The inarticulate Sorrows of the World.—How to conquer the oppressive Weight of Time.—Giving Happiness.....	176
XLIII. Transmission of Letters on Sunday.—The Puritan’s Sabbath.—True Basis of a Day of Rest.....	178
XLIV. Irony and Indignation of Christ.—Resignation of Heart.—Recollection of Swiss Tour.....	178
XLV. Evil of taking Opiales.....	179
XLVI. Feelings during the Sunday Services.—Is human Love Idolatry?—The Mystery of Suffering.....	180

Letter	Letters from October, 1849, to December, 1850—Continued.	
XLVII.	St. Paul's Estimate of Women.—The Agony of Skepticism.....	Page 180
XLVIII.	The Temperaments of the Northern and Southern Nations contrasted.	181
XLIX.	Sunset, and Sympathy with Nature.—Desolate Loneliness with Truth better than a comfortable Life with the Consciousness of being in Error.—Walk by Night in Hove Churchyard.....	182
L.	Keble's Hymn for the 22d Sunday after Trinity.—Influence of Carlyle.	183
LI.	"Walk in the Spirit," etc., etc.—Does Friendship gain by Absence?..	184
LII.	The Mercy which is Just.—The Poetry of Prosaic Life.—When Solitude is useful to Character.—Keble's Hymn for the 23d Sunday after Trinity.....	185
LIII.	Inspiration.....	186
LIV.	Description of a Stormy Day.—Capital Punishment.—Keble's Line "Who for the spangles wears the funeral pall?"—Shelley's Gloom.—Love of cheerful, healthy Life.....	187
LV.	Source of the Strength of the Will of Christ.—Sins of Thought.—Dr. Channing's Life.—Did Channing Worship Christ?.....	189
LVI.	Depression.—Keble's Hymn for the 24th Sunday after Trinity.—The Temptation of Christ as enabling him to sympathize with Men....	191
LVII.	Swedenborg.—Story Illustrating how Skepticism is born of Superstition.....	193
LVIII.	Self-devotion as a mere Instinct.—Majesty of Law.—Keble's Hymn for the 25th Sunday after Trinity.....	195
LIX.	Robespierre's Theory and Practice of the Punishment of Death.—Administration of the Communion to the Murderer.—Superhuman Forgiveness.—"Le mystère de l'existence, c'est le rapport de nos erreurs avec nos peines."—The Trial of Christ, <i>only</i> three Years!.....	196
LX.	Shakspeare and his Critics.—Healthy Humanity of Shakspeare....	198
LXI.	"Romeo and Juliet."—Threelfold Web of Life.—A Friend's Analysis of the teaching in Trinity Chapel.....	199
LXII.	Keble's Hymn for the Sunday next before Advent.—The Doctrine of the Atonement.....	201
LXIII.	The true Mode of beginning a Christian Life.—"My God, my God, why hast Thon forsaken me?"—Christ as Conqueror of ALL Evil.—Are <i>we</i> guilty of His Death?—Character judged by Handwriting.—"If God is Love why do we need a Mediator?".....	202
LXIV.	End served by the Mutilation of our Affections.—Rigid Rules do not produce Goodness.—Greek Art.—"Comus."—Deep Sadness.—Difficulties of position.....	205
LXV.	January 4, 1850: Duty of larger Interest in Humanity.—Death of the Queen Dowager.....	207
LXVI.	Anecdotes of the Kaffir War.....	208
LXVII.	The same Subject.....	209
LXVIII.	Afternoon Lectures on Genesis.....	210
LXIX.	Anecdote of the Bishop of Glasgow.—Self-sacrifice.—Walk by the Seacoast.....	211
LXX.	Humble Resignation.....	212
LXXI.	Relative Priority of Will and Law.—Where can we best worship, alone in the Temple of the Universe, or in a Church with living Men?....	212
LXXII.	Need of devotional Reading.—Channing's Life.....	213
LXXIII.	Advice to a Friend perplexed by petty Domestic Troubles.....	214
LXXIV.	Uselessness of mere Eloquence.—Lessing and Warburton.....	214
LXXV.	Hatred of Evil.—Sad Fate of an English Lady.—Lessing's Speculation as to Pre-existence.—The "Veracity" of Woman.....	215
LXXVI.	The Gorham Judgment.....	216
LXXVII.	Sermons on Baptism.—The Phrase "Too Late."—The so-called Means of Grace.....	217
LXXVIII.	On Baptism.....	218
LXXIX.	Unconscious Influence.—"The Luxury of doing good?"—Intellectual Cultivation <i>versus</i> Moral Good.—Lord Byron.—Phédre.....	220
LXXX.	The Truth that God is Love can not be reached through the "Understanding."—Anecdote of Himself.—The Necessity of the Economy of Truths.—Story of Rogers and "Junius".....	222
LXXXI.	Analogy of Morning, Midday, and Evening with Human Life.—Advantage of living by the Sea-side.—Wild Feelings suggested by the stormy Sea.....	224
LXXXII.	Speculative and Meditative form of Character contrasted with the Practical and Contriving.—Blessed are they that Mourn.....	225
LXXXIII.	"The Course of true Love never did run Smooth."—Romance in Early Love.....	225
LXXXIV.	Calming Power of English Country Scenery.—Wordsworth's Prelude.—Settled Depression.—To do Good for <i>our own</i> Sake?.....	226

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Letters from October, 1849, to December, 1850—Continued.</i>	
LXXXV.	"All is Well".....	Page 228
LXXXVI.	The final Cause of Sorrow.....	228
LXXXVII.	"Macbeth."—Regulation of outward Life.....	229

CHAPTER IX.

1851.

Interest of Mr. Robertson in Social Questions.—Sermon Preached in Mr. Drew's Church to Working-men.—He is accused with Mr. Maurice and Professor Kingsley of Socialistic Opinions.—His Answer.—The "Record" Newspaper reasserts the Charge after his Death.—Letters of Mr. Maurice on the Subject.—Letters of Mr. Robertson on Professor Kingsley's Sermon.—Letter from Mr. Drew containing Extracts from Mr. Robertson's Letters on the same Subject.—Declining Health.—Lectures on the Epistles to the Corinthians.—Lecture to Working-men at Hurstpierpoint.—Close of the Year 1851..... 230

*Letters from March 14 to December 5, 1851.*

LXXXVIII.	Ruskin's "Stones of Venice."—A clear Conception, or an infinite Feeling of Truths, which is best?.....	240
LXXXIX.	Changes in the Representation of the Virgin in Art.—The Virgin as Intercessor with the Father.—Analogous Idea in "Evangelicalism."—Truth at the Root of these Ideas.—Truth at the Root of Mariolatry.—Wrongs done to Women.....	240
XC.	Ruskin.—The way to read much and well.—The System of Louis Blanc.....	241
XCI.	Warning to one entering London Life.....	242
XCI.	To the Same.—Excitement and its Correctives.....	243
XCIII.	Edwardes's "Punjab."—"Why was John the most beloved?"—Desire for humbler, simpler Life.....	244
XCIV.	Fear of Imbecility.—Description of strange Symptoms.....	245
XCv.	Apologue à la Menenius on the essential difference between the Nature of Man and that of Woman.....	245
XCVI.	Opening of the Great Exhibition.....	247
XCvII.	"Non-spirituality of the yearning for Death".....	247
XCvIII.	The Rest of the Future.....	248
XCIX.	Estimate of his own Ministry in the Pulpit.....	248
C.	Mode of Looking at Dogmas.—The Opposition to his Teaching, and his Consolation.....	249
CI.	Answer to the Question, "Is it wise to read both Sides of the Questions of Religious Truth?".....	250
CII.	"The Progress of Society?".....	251
CIII.	Visit from Mr. Maurice.....	252
CIV.	What Science, in its mode of viewing things, can and can not do....	252
CV.	On the Book "The Law of Man's Nature".....	253
CVI.	On the same.....	253
CVII.	On an article on Carlyle.....	254
CVIII.	"The Necessarian Scheme."—The Measure of the Spirituality of "Material Manifestations".....	254
CIX.	Leigh Hunt.—Covent Garden Market.—Influence of Beauty on Love.....	255
CX.	Co-operative System.....	256
CXI.	What am I, an Eclectic in Theology or not?.....	257
CXII.	Visits to the Poor.—Professor Kingsley's Sermon.—How to read the Bible.....	258
CXIII.	The Pulpit.—Political Preaching.—Preaching for Show.....	259
CXIV.	The possible work of Womanhood in the Future.—Tennyson's Vision of Sin.—Clerical Backbiting.....	260
CXV.	Justification by Faith.....	261
CXVI.	The Baptismal Controversy.....	262
CXVII.	Luke xviii. 8.—Reading.—Kossuth.....	264
CXVIII.	Daily Life and Reading.—Speculation and Faith.....	265
CXIX.	Love to Christ.—"If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen," etc.—Kossuth.....	266
CXX.	Attack by the "Record".....	267
CXXI.	Kossuth.—Transient Enthusiasm.—Policy of Non-intervention....	267
CXXII.	Eternity and Time.—Review of "In Memoriam".....	268
CXXIII.	Devout Feeling and Morality.—Socrates.—Hartley Coleridge.—"Binding and loosing Sin".....	270

CHAPTER X.

1852.

Feelings and Interests of Mr. Robertson in January, 1852.—His Pleasure in Ornithology.—His Resolute Labors.—Character of his Sermons.—His Humility, Gentleness.—His proud Sternness and Indignation.—Two Anecdotes in Illustration.—His Efforts in behalf of the Mechanics' Institute.—The two Lectures on the "Influence of Poetry on the Working-classes."—Their Results upon the Workingmen.—Letters of Mr. Drummond and Lord Carlisle upon the Lectures, and Mr. Robertson's Replies.—Criticism by the "South Church Union."—Reply on the points, "that Severance from all Parties and Maxims is a *first* Principle in Seeking after Truth;" that "Poetry is always most cultivated in effeminate Ages."—Visit to Cheltenham.—Sermons preached at Lewes Assizes.—Address presented by the Young Men of his Congregation.—His Speech on the Occasion.—Letter about the Address.—Answer to the Accusation that his change of Views did not give him Peace of Mind.—Letters of Mr. Robertson to one of his Congregation on his own Ministry, and on his "Deepening Conviction" that the Truths which he taught were True.—"My Mind has grown by a regular Development year by year."—His Confirmation-class.—The Elections at Brighton in 1852.—Proposition to open the Crystal Palace on Sunday.—Sermon and Letters on the Subject.—"Orthodox" Attacks.—Close of the Year..... Page 271

*Letter*                      *Letters from January 24, 1852, to December, 1852.*

CXXXIV. The Peace Party.....	293
CXXXV. Was God's Plan for Humanity thwarted by the Fall?.....	293
CXXXVI. The Assizes at Lewes.—A Trial for Murder.—Importance of Forms	294
CXXXVII. "Feeling" as Critic of Capital Punishment.—The French and the English Watch-words.—Death of a Friend's Wife.....	295
CXXXVIII. Religion is Poetry.—Antagonism of Aristocratic Sympathies and Democratic Principles.....	296
CXXXIX. Depression.—Extract from Sermon: Loss of the <i>Birkenhead</i> .....	296
CXXX. The Belief in a Future Life.....	297
CXXXI. Contrast of the Exhaustion consequent on London Gayety, and that consequent on Laborious Work.....	298
CXXXII. Prefatory Observations to M. Zaba's Lecture on Mnemonics.....	298
CXXXIII. Margaret F. Ossoli.....	301
CXXXIV. Condition of teaching well.—Necessity of some Diffuseness.....	301
CXXXV. Delight in Intense Heat.—Margaret F. Ossoli.—Reply to a Lady who had resolved to quit Trinity Chapel.—Pain at this Desertion.....	302
CXXXVI. Margaret F. Ossoli.....	303
CXXXVII. Ireland.—Absenteeism.—Emancipation Bill.....	303
CXXXVIII. Lewes Assizes.....	304
CXXXIX. Inspiration.....	303
CXL. Effect of the Apostolic Anticipation of the End of the World.—The main Doctrine of Christ.—Romans ix. 20, 21.—Inspiration of the Bible.—Truth is judged by the Spirit, not by the Understanding.—"Who is my Neighbor?".....	306
CXLI. America.—Anticipation of War.—How People loved him.....	308
CXLII. Self-sacrifice and the Sentimentalisms which degrade it.....	309
CXLIII. State of Ireland.—Thoughts on the Case of one who had labored but failed to remedy the Evils on his Irish Estate.—Antagonism to Evil.—David's Denunciation of his Enemies.—Gorgeons Sunset..	309
CXLIV. Funeral of the Duke of Wellington.—England recognizes her Great Men at last.—The <i> motive</i> of the "Greatest Happiness" theory.—Is it God's motive?—Was it Christ's?—Should it be Ours?.....	311

CHAPTER XI.

1853.

Friendship of Mr. Robertson with Lady Byron.—State of his Health.—Advance of Disease.—Sermons of this Year.—The Principles which underlie his Teaching.—Adoration of the Virgin.—Sacrament of the Mass.—Purgatory.—Apostolical Succession.—The Seven Sacraments.—Suggestive, not Dogmatic Teaching.—The Peace-maker.—Fonndation of his Teaching.—His Position with regard to Unitarianism.—Lecture on Wordsworth.—Letter in answer to a Criticism, in which he discloses the loneliness of his Heart.—Wordsworth and High-Churchism.—Letter replying to one of the High-Chnrch Party who urged him to unite himself to them.—Increasing Weakness.—Visit to Cheltenham.—His Congregation offers him a Curate.—The Vicar puts a veto on his Choice.—Last Sermons preached in Trinity Chapel, May 29, 1853..... 313

Letter

Letters from January 5, 1853, to May 18, 1853.

CXLV. Benvenuto Cellini's Life.....	Page 331
CXLVI. Mr. Maurice's Sermons on the Crystal Palace Sunday Question.....	331
CXLVII. Failure of originating Power of Thought.—Cellini's Life.....	332
CXLVIII. Religious Sentimentalism.—Solemn Sense of the Responsibility of the Preacher.....	333
CXLIX. Life of mere Amusement fatal to a Christian Life.—Austerity of Youth and Age contrasted.....	333
CL. Two possible Sides to Religion.....	334
CLI. Visit to Lady Byron.—Pleasure in Peaceful Life.—Legends of the Madonna.—Sermons on Roman Catholic Doctrines.....	334
CLII. Belief in a Proposition dependent on Comprehension of the Terms of the Proposition.—Visit to a Farmer.—Deep Depression caused by his Illness.—False Familiarity of "Evangelicalism."—Fatal Evil of Facility in devotional Expression.....	335
CLIII. Effort to harmonize and strengthen the Mind.—Health of Towns Act.—Wordsworth.—Value of the Prestige of Rank.....	338
CLIV. Laws of Health, God's Laws.....	339
CLV. Advice as to reading the History of England.—Manner of Reading... ..	340
CLVI. Life and Illness.—No High Goodness without Strength.—Accident at the Railway Station.....	341
CLVII. Powerlessness except as Working from Life.—Influence of Sacred Pictures.—Humboldt's Letters.—"The Genius Loci".....	342
CLVIII. Visit to Cheltenham.—The Novels of Scott.—Modern French and English Novels, and the Question they open.....	343
CLIX. Return to Work, and Return of Pain.—"My Novel".....	344
CLX. Symptoms of coming Death.....	345
CLXI. 1 Cor. ix. 27.—"If there be any Virtue," etc. ....	346
CLXII. "Not as I will."—Contrast between the Past and Present.....	347
CLXIII. The Beauty of Good Health.—"Wordsworth's Life."—Increasing Weakness.....	347

CHAPTER XII.

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, 1853.

Mr. Robertson leaves Trinity Chapel forever.—The Controversy with the Vicar of Brighton.—The last sad Months.—Death and Burial.....	349
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

Robertson's personal Appearance.—Is he to be judged from his Letters or his Sermons?—His passionate Heart and inquiring Intellect.—Necessity of Self-expression.—The Work of his Life.—Results of his Preaching; of his Labor among the Working-men.—Results of his Life and Teaching: as a Clergyman; as the Uniter of Parties; as the fearless Speaker; as the prudent Christian; as the individual Thinker.—Accused of Latitudinarianism and Faithlessness to the Church of England.—The unexampled Circulation of his Sermons.—Recognition of the Value of his Work since his Death.—Subscription at his Funeral.—Bust erected in the Pavilion; in the Bodleian.—Memorial Window at Brasenose.—Farewell.....	358
--	-----

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

Letters written by personal friends of Mr. Robertson in illustration of his Life and Character.....	369
---	-----

APPENDIX II.

Notes of two Sunday Afternoon Lectures on Genesis xviii. Genesis xxii.....	386
--	-----

APPENDIX III.

A few of the Questions and Answers on the Catechism compiled by Mr. Robertson for his Confirmation Class, and a Letter to a Candidate.....	393
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# LIFE AND LETTERS

OF THE

## REV. FREDK. W. ROBERTSON.

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### CHAPTER I.

Birth of F. W. Robertson.—Childhood.—Love of Nature.—Character as a Boy at the Academy in Edinburgh.—Youthful Interests.—Choice of Profession.—Military Enthusiasm.—Studies for the Indian Service.—Circumstances which led him into the Church.—Enters Oxford.—Contact with Tractarianism.—Religious Views and Christian Effort.—Reading.—Arnold and Wordsworth.—Speaking at the "Union."—His Opinion as to the Position of a Popular Preacher.—Two Letters recalling his College Life.—Ferment of his Mind at Oxford.—Letter expressing his Opinion of the Tract School and his Desire for a Military Chaplaincy.—Examination for his Degree.—He Studies for Ordination.—Letters reviewing the Position of the English Church.

Letters from May, 1838, to June, 1840.

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON, the eldest of the seven children of Frederick and Sarah Robertson, was born February 3, 1816, in London, at the house of his grandfather, Colonel Robertson, a distinguished officer, who was wounded in the service.

His father, who is still alive, was a captain in the Royal Artillery. Two of his brothers, Charles Duesbury, of the Royal Engineers,\* and Harry, of the 60th Royal Rifles, won frequent "honorable mention" in the Kaffir War. The third, Struan, was a captain in the Royal South Lincoln Militia. They all survived him, but before he had reached his twenty-fifth year he had grieved over the death of his three sisters.

The first five years of his childhood were passed at Leith Fort. In 1821, his father, then captain in the Royal Artillery, retired on half pay in order to attend to the education of his children, left Leith and settled at Beverley, in Yorkshire. There he personally instructed his son for four years, and then sent him to the grammar-school of the town, under the Rev. G. P. Richards.

In 1829 the family went to Tours, where young Robertson

\* He is now Lieut.-Colonel in his corps. He received the brevet rank of Major for his services in the Kaffir War.

studied the classics with an English tutor, attended a French seminary, and laid the foundation of his accurate knowledge of the French language. In consequence of the revolution of 1830, his father returned to England, and placed the boy, now nearly sixteen years old, in the New Academy, Edinburgh, under the late Rev. John Williams, afterwards Archdeacon of Cardigan.

He owed much to the careful education and watchfulness of his parents. They kept him apart from evil influences, and made his home his most honored recollection. This seclusion, and the books he was induced to read in childhood, were both so calculated to develop his character in a true direction, that he mentions them afterwards in some MS. notes, written at Winchester, as two of the special mercies with which God had blessed his infancy. The loneliness which is more or less the lot of the eldest of the family, soon created in him a thoughtfulness full of imagination, and a spirit of inquiry which supplied him with the materials for a silent self-education. But on this account he became neither morbid nor unnatural. On the contrary, he was a radiant and eager child, full of healthy enjoyment of life, delighting in air, and sunlight, and active exercise. His happy childhood at Leith Fort was a cherished memory of his ministerial life, and he looked back upon it with a pleasure deepened by the necessarily sedentary nature of his profession. In 1849, he writes from Brighton :

My pony, and my cricket, and my rabbits, and my father's pointers, and the days when I proudly carried his game-bag, and my ride home with the old game-keeper by moonlight in the frosty evenings, and the boom of the cannon, and my father's orderly, the artilleryman who used to walk with me hand-in-hand—these are my earliest recollections.

Even at that time there seems to have been nothing in external nature which did not give him pleasure, and awake in him a vivid interest. The fresh winds, and sunlight, and clear waters, which he enjoyed at Leith, seemed to have infused their own spirit into his receptive organization. He wandered over the country with an open eye and heart, and found in every walk and ride something to admire and to love. He had a child's affection and reverence for animals, and especially for birds. He studied their natural history; he watched them to their haunts; he rejoiced in the freedom of their life as if it had been his own; he even began a book in which he made drawings of them, with notes on their habits and habitations. Many will remember the passage in one of his lectures on poetry, in which he notices with enthusiasm Wilson's work on "Birds," and Waterton's "Wanderings,"

and describes with the minuteness of affection the series of stuffed birds which illustrated falconry in the Exhibition of 1851. "I have visited," he says, "the finest museums in Europe, and spent many a long day in watching the habits of birds in the woods, hidden and unseen by them; but I never saw the reproduction of life till I saw these."

He describes himself, in boyhood, "as iron in strength, broad and stout." He excelled in manly games and athletic exercises, and was the leader of all the daring exploits of his companions. To this he joined a love of reading and of quiet remarkable at his age. On the brightest day he would become entranced in some tale of chivalry or imagination which charmed him into stillness. He loved to fancy himself a knight—seeking adventure, redressing wrongs, laying down his life for maidens in distress; and often for hours together the vividness of these imaginary pictures would separate him from the commonly thoughtless activity of a boy's life, and exile him from his companions. Lying at the root of much of this dreaminess, was the sensitiveness of nerve and feeling which so strongly marked and influenced his whole existence. It betrayed its presence during boyhood in his shy and sometimes defiant manner, and in a settled self-mistrust, often sinking into hopelessness. "Deficiency of hope," he says himself, "is the great fault of my character."

Such a temperament, without his strong will and stern sense of duty, would naturally have led him into idleness. But it was not so with him. In childhood he learned quickly, and mastered fully what he had learnt. His memory was retentive, and in later years he could recall with ease page after page of books which he had not read since his boyhood. But this power never stole from him his conviction that perseverance in labor was the only foundation of real knowledge. He was an intense worker. He never left a subject till he had done his utmost to exhaust it, and to examine it in all its bearings. At the Academy in Edinburgh his toil was incessant, and he soon took a high place in his class. Though without the advantage of previous training in the lower forms, he gained at the end of the session the first prizes for Latin verse, English prose, the French language, and French recitation, and contested so sharply the prize given to the best Greek scholar, that the decision was referred to Professor Sandford, who gave it in favor of the Dux of the Academy—George Moncrieff, with whom, as boy and man, Robertson maintained an unbroken friendship.

All this success surprised no one more than himself; he continually wrote home in depreciation of his work. This

self-mistrust made him even then acutely conscious of small errors. In composition, he magnified slight failures in the rhythm and style of a sentence into grave faults; he was intolerant of a misplaced stop; he shrank with all the over-subtle purism of a boy from a mispronunciation or an antiquated pronunciation of words. He carried this humility and sensitiveness into morals: the slightest deviation from truthfulness in words or truthfulness in action was abhorrent to his nature. His mother said of him, "I never knew him tell a lie;" and he would rather have lost every prize at the Academy, than owe one to foreign help or to the usual aid which boys seek from translations.

The principal of the Academy soon recognized the character he had to deal with, and gave him repeated encouragement, and of this he speaks with grateful appreciation. Without sympathy he would have been hopeless, although he would not have ceased to work; for there was mingled in him the womanliness which seeks for external help, and the manliness which performs a duty even in loneliness. To romance, sensitiveness, delicacy, humility, great gentleness, he added, even at this early age, a practical view of life, calm good sense, steady adherence to right, unselfishness, and a courage at once enthusiastic and prudent. Two letters, written when he was sixteen years old, to his mother and brother, shortly after the cholera appeared at Edinburgh, will illustrate some of these points of character:

February 26, 1832.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—You need be under no apprehension concerning the cholera, as the cases here, upon an average, are one a week, or something of that kind. If, however, it should increase in violence, I have made up my mind to remain here. In the first place, I should bring infection home, and it would be extremely selfish to bring others into danger merely for my own private safety. In the next place, instead of escaping it, I might only rush into danger in my journey. I am sorry to say, that because I kept a good place at first in my class, the Rector said to several persons that he expected me to be second at the end of the year. He will, I am sorry to say, soon find out his mistake, as I am terribly behind-hand in several things. Ten o'clock P.M.—I have just finished fagging hard for to-morrow.

July 2, 1832.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Tell papa that my suspicions about the French composition prize were but too well founded; for this morning, Monsieur Braed, after I had endeavored for a long time to get it out of him, acknowledged that he had given the prize to Moncrieff. He then put me in a very trying situation, by asking me to recite it (Moncrieff's) on the exhibition-day. I told him I could not decide, but would give him an answer to-morrow. Though it is hard upon me to be thus made the herald of my own defeat, I have determined to comply, partly for Moncrieff's sake, and partly because I am determined that whatever I feel, it shall not be visible. A few days ago the Academical Club, or rather a deputation, waited on the Rector to announce the decision upon the English verses given in a long time ago. The seventh, sixth, and fifth classes were summoned into the Rector's class-room,

and the prize was decided to have been gained by Terrot in my class. After he had recited his verses, we were told that all the other copies which had been given in were very meritorious, but that the two next in merit to Terrot's were so equal, that they had been unable to decide between them. I was astonished by hearing my motto read out as one of them, and still more so when I was called upon to recite them. Imagine me standing elevated upon the Rector's platform, and feeling more like a criminal than any thing else. I trembled so violently that I could not hold the paper steady, and do not know how I managed to get to the end. The deafening claps of the boys were the first thing that brought me to my senses. I can not imagine what I shall do when I recite the French in the public hall with several hundred spectators, when I felt so uncomfortable by just reading before a hundred and twenty boys, most of whom I knew, the masters, and a few of the directors, and the Academical Club.

At the end of the session he left the Academy, and, under the care of Mr. Terrot, afterwards Bishop of Edinburgh, attended the various classes at the University, and at the age of eighteen returned home, bringing with him a large amount of multifarious knowledge and many memories of a pleasant life and profitable study. Of his general reading at Edinburgh there is no record, but he had devoted himself eagerly to practical chemistry and physical geography. There remains among his papers a MS. book full of notes of Professor Jameson's lectures, and illustrated by drawings, which manifest the artistic talents which he afterwards cultivated, and then, when he had attained to some excellence, characteristically despised.

But his interest in all these things was small in comparison with his enthusiasm for a military life. This was literally born with him. At Leith, before he was five years old, he drank in, with all the eagerness of a boy, the intoxicating aroma of his father's profession. "I was rocked and cradled," he writes, "to the roar of artillery, and the very name of such things sounds to me like home. A review, suggesting the conception of a real battle, impresses me to tears; I can not see a regiment manœuvre, nor artillery in motion, without a choking sensation."

The traditions of his family suggested and fostered this passionate love of arms.\* The conversation at home was full of recollections of bivouac and battle, and of the daring exploits of Sir Charles Napier, who was his father's personal friend and comrade in arms. He writes from the Academy to his brother, begging that the miniature fort in the garden at home might not be blown up till he arrived. He argued

\* Captain Robertson, in June, 1805, was embarked on board the *Victory*, when Nelson's fleet of twelve sail of the line took troops on board at Barbadoes and went in pursuit of the Toulon squadron, and whilst serving with the land and naval forces on the coast of North America in 1813, was mentioned in terms of commendation in four different dispatches. At the capture of Hampton, in Virginia, he stormed and captured, with signal bravery, the enemy's last field-piece.

daily with his French masters on military engineering. It is no wonder that, on leaving Edinburgh, the secret wish of his heart to enter the army had grown into a settled purpose. This was not, however, the intention of his father, who considered that the character of his son, and his deep religious feeling, were unfitted for a barrack life. The Church was, therefore, proposed to him as a profession; but his answer was decisive—"Any thing but that: I am not fit for it."

He was then (1833) articled to Mr. Borton, a solicitor at Bury St. Edmund's, and passed a year in his office. But the sedentary nature of the work broke down his health; and Captain Robertson discovered that his son had adopted a profession which he detested, only through a feeling of chivalrous obedience. It was then resolved that he should follow the bent of his genius. An application was made to the Horse Guards for a commission. It was refused on the ground of age. But his mother's family had been fortunate enough to do the King, when Prince William, some service, and the refusal was retracted. His name was placed upon the list for a cavalry regiment serving in India. He was enraptured, and immediately began to study for his profession with enthusiasm. He went to stay with his brother in the Engineers at Chatham, to gain an insight into practical engineering. His whole soul was in his work. He recalls in later letters that time: "On that road I had walked and ridden, oh, how often; exulting in the future, fearless, full of hope, and feeling the perfection of the present; days when I was prodigal of happiness."

A spirit so buoyant and enthusiastic fitted him well for the army, and he became a first-rate rider, a good shot, and an excellent draughtsman. He omitted nothing likely to make him a faithful and useful officer. In hope and work two years were thus passed by, during which he lived with his family at Cheltenham. There it was that Captain Robertson, under the impression that his application to the King had been forgotten, again proposed to his son the profession of the Church, and again was answered by a firm refusal. The temptations to which he would be exposed in the army were strongly set before him, but he could not believe that they were any real barriers against his entrance into it; on the contrary, with his usual desire for some positive outward evil to contend with, he imagined that it was his peculiar vocation to bear witness to God, to set the example of a pure and Christian life in his corps, to be, as he said, "the Cornelius of his regiment." The trained obedience of an army to one head harmonized with his own strong conception of the

beauty of order and the dignity of duty. All the impulses of his character to self-sacrifice, chivalry, daring, romantic adventure, the conquest of oppression, the living of life intensely, he looked forward to satisfying as a soldier; and he believed that the active out-door existence of a campaign, with its danger and excitement, would suit his physical temperament, and tend to neutralize his constitutional nervousness.

Associated in remarkable contrast with his vivid outward life and activity at this time, was an inward life, peculiarly sensitive, subtle in thought, more subtle still in feeling, full of poetical and religious sentiment. It was impossible to express in prose the minuter shades of feeling which passed over his heart as boyhood grew into youth, and he began at this period to read poetry with greater eagerness and to write verses. His own efforts are, strange to say, characterized by almost no imagination, and curiously devoid of poetical talent. The influence of Pope, of whom he was now an ardent admirer, seems to have clogged all his attempts at English verse. Striving after the terseness of thought and sharp clearness of expression which mark his model, he naturally became incapable of putting into verse delicate dreams of intuitive feeling. Perhaps it was owing to his discovery of this want that he ceased for a time to read Pope, and turned in preference to Byron and Shakspeare.

To two great objects—the profession of arms which he had chosen, and the service of Christ in that profession—he now devoted himself wholly. They filled his life, and for both of them he read carefully. It marks his honesty and sincerity of purpose, that, immediately on making sure of his commission in the Indian cavalry, he gave himself up to preparation for service in that country. He would have thought it a sin against truthfulness of character, if he had adopted a career without a special training for his work. With this purpose he studied the early history and geography of India, and the characters of its various populations: He mapped the campaigns, and made himself master of the strategical movements of the British generals in that country. The fortunes of India, and the constitution which the English had elaborated for their large dependency, became familiar to him. It is interesting to observe how fondly he recalled at Brighton these youthful studies, how he followed the course of the Sikh war, and read with careful pleasure the exploits of Napier\* and the story of Major Edwardes's career. In a series of lectures delivered at Brighton, and unfortunately

\* A picture of Sir Charles Napier was hung in his study, and he used to call it his household god.

lost, he treated of Christianity as it would come into contact with Hindooism with the same wide grasp of principles and in the same manner as he dealt with the advent of Christ to the Greek, Roman, and Barbarian. The seed of which these lectures were the flower was sown at this time.

Parallel with his military reading, in rather a strange contrast, ran his religious reading. Sometimes both glided into one another, as when, in the hope of advancing Christ's kingdom, he devoted a portion of his time to the history of Indian missions, and the study of the reasons of their small success; and with a rare wisdom, the need of which has at last been recognized, gained all the information accessible to him upon the religion of the Hindoos. At other times his reading was entirely theological. Towards the end of 1836 he seems to have almost given up the hope of hearing favorably from the Horse Guards, and, with a kind of presentiment, began to labor at books on Evidences and on Prophecy. Then again, as if the hope of a military life had reawakened, he analyzed the Jugurthine war. In his common-place book may be seen the fluctuations of his mind between the Church and the Army as professions, or, at least, his desire to bring Christianity into a soldier's life.

All these fair hopes were destined to disappointment. Looking back now on his career as a clergyman, and considering the wide influence which his published sermons have had in England, it is interesting to trace how he was apparently impelled by circumstances into the clerical profession.

In March, 1837, he met Mr. Davies, now Vicar of Tewkesbury, at the house of a common friend in Cheltenham. A close friendship soon sprung up between them. Mr. Davies, believing that he saw in Robertson all the elements which would form a successful and devoted minister of the Church, endeavored to dissuade him from entering the army.\* He

\* Mr. Davies thus relates the origin of their friendship: "The daughter of Lady Trench, at whose house I met my friend, had been seriously ill. She was prevented from sleeping by the barking of a dog in one of the adjoining houses. This house was Captain Robertson's. A letter was written to ask that the dog might be removed; and so kind and acquiescent a reply was returned, that Lady Trench called to express her thanks. She was much struck at that visit by the manner and bearing of the eldest son, and, in consequence, an intimacy grew up between the families."

This apparently trivial circumstance is mentioned, because in one of Mr. Robertson's papers a curious allusion to it has been found, which proves that this intimacy promoted the change of his profession. He is speaking of one of his favorite theories—that all great truths consist of two opposites which are not contradictory. "All is free," he says: "that is false; all is fated—that is false. All things are free and fated—that is true. I can not overthrow the argument of the man who says that every thing is fated, or, in other words, that God orders all things, and can not change that order. If I had not met a certain person, I should not have changed my profession; if I had not known a certain lady, I should not probably have met this person; if that lady had not had a delicate daughter who was disturbed by the barking of my dog; if my dog had not barked that night, I should now have been in the Dragoons, or fertilizing the soil of India. Who can say that these things were not ordered, and that, apparently, the merest trifles did not produce failure and a marred existence?"



replied, "that the matter had been already settled, that application had been made long ago, and interest employed to obtain a commission." He added, "I do not become a soldier to win laurels; my object is to do good." Mr. Davies, however, did not desist till he had obtained from him a promise to allow the whole matter to be reconsidered. His mind, however, remained fixed in its previous resolution. Three weeks only before he entered Oxford his father said to him, "I think you had better reconsider your plans and enter the Church." He answered, energetically, "No, never!" The following day he met Mr. Daly, now the Bishop of Cashel, at Lady Trench's. It struck him as singular that Mr. Daly should ask him, so soon after his father's suggestion, "Whether it were definitely settled that he should go into the army?" After some conversation, he inquired, "What would you advise me to do?" Mr. Daly, who, much impressed by his unaffected piety, desired to see him in the Church, answered, "Do as your father likes, and pray to God to direct your father aright." His friends also at Cheltenham urged the same upon him. He spoke then to his father, and left the final decision in his hands. With a romantic instinct of self-sacrifice which transcended the bounds of prudence, he resolved to give up the idea of his whole life. Yet he would scarcely have done this had not his strong sense of duty been appealed to by the arguments of his friends, and had not his characteristic self-mistrust disposed him to believe that he was himself the worst judge of his future profession.

His father, after anxious consideration, decided at last to send him up immediately to Oxford with Mr. Davies. With some difficulty, and through the interest of Mr. Churton, who wished to secure him for his college, a vacancy was found for him in Brazenose. He wrote home to state this, and added, with evidently a lingering wish for the army, "What shall I do?" He shrunk with deep pain from completing the sacrifice. But his father wrote to say, "Accept it;" and on May 4, 1837, he was examined and matriculated.

Five days afterwards, the long-expected letter came from the military secretary, offering him a cavalry commission in the 2d Dragoons, with the option of exchange into the 3d, just embarking for India. Had it arrived three weeks sooner, he had never entered the Church; but arriving after his matriculation, his father considered that God had directed the circumstances, and the commission was declined.

He was now twenty-one years old, and accepting, somewhat sternly, his destiny, he began his university career.

Before entering on residence, he spent much time with Mr. Davies. They walked daily together, and his friend, anxious lest he should have forced his inclinations, asked him frequently whether he was satisfied with what had been done. He would never answer directly, but only quietly reply, "Wait; some day I will tell you."

Often (Mr. Davies writes) when passing a soldier in the street, has he tightly pressed my arm, observing, "Well, so I am to have nothing to do with them;" and at other times, "Poor fellows, they are but little thought of; few care for their souls." I can never forget the feeling and energetic manner in which he would quote at length the passage from Coleridge's "Sibylline Leaves," dwelling with marked emphasis on the lines—

As if the soldier died without a wound;  
As if the fibres of this godlike frame  
Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch  
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,  
Passed off to Heaven, translated and not killed;  
As though he had no wife to pine for him,  
No God to judge him.

It was with great delight that he told me that the application for a commission had been successful, for it would not be said that he went into the Church because he could not get into the army.

During the summer he went up the Wye, and visited Tintern by moonlight. Mr. Davies, who accompanied him, remembers that he always collected the servants of the several inns to evening prayers, and recalls his intense and romantic enjoyment of the scenery; and

Yet (continues Mr. Davies), with all this poetical sense of life and nature, I never knew any one who took a more correct view of life, and who was more anxious to deal in a manly and Christian way with its realities.

At the time to which I refer I never knew him otherwise than cheerful, and there were times when his spirits were exuberant, times when he was in the mood of thoroughly enjoying every thing. With him as I was, daily and hourly, I can testify that he was a constant and prayerful student of his Bible. \* \* \* He possessed a very logical mind, and in argument was a close and accurate reasoner. At this time he held firmly what are understood as evangelical views, and for these he would mildly but perseveringly contend. He advocated strongly the pre-millennial advent of Christ. But one who was more free from the shibboleths of a party, or more abhorrent from any thing like cant, or one who regarded others with a more large-hearted charity, I never knew.

In October, 1837, Mr. Robertson became a resident at Brazenose. With his deep and cultivated interest in all the variations of religious opinion, he at once came into contact with the movement which engrossed a large portion of the most remarkable men in the university, under the leadership of John Henry Newman. Several efforts were made to induce Mr. Robertson to join this party. He had himself been much impressed by a sermon of Mr. Newman's "On Sin after Baptism," and the contest which arose in his mind

from his sense of the fervor and sincerity of religious feeling which marked the Tract school, and his own instinctive recoil from the doctrines which they held, resulted in a state of deep mental depression. But depression never at any time of his life was permitted to pass the point where it merges into intellectual or spiritual slothfulness; and now, as always, it spurred him into activity. He began immediately to study critically the Acts of the Apostles, and he wrote to his father to say that he had not gone through the book before he felt satisfied that, on the subject of baptism at least, the Tractarian school was in error. With a calmer mind than before, he now endeavored to make himself master of Mr. Newman's opinions, and to refute them. His copy of Tract 90, and of Dr. Pusey's letter to the Bishop of Oxford, are largely annotated by his answers to their arguments. He seems to have read carefully about this time, as books bearing on the whole subject, "Collier's History," "Calvin's Institutes," "Ranke's History of the Popes," and many of the replies published at Oxford in 1838, '39.

From the main conviction with regard to Mr. Newman's opinions which he then attained he never afterwards swerved. But he did not join then, or at any time, in the persecution and slander with which the Tractarians were assailed. He invariably spoke bravely—and that when brave speaking was dangerous to his position—in behalf of their manliness, devotion, and practical work.

Nor was he content with convincing himself of the errors of the prominent school at Oxford. He endeavored to counteract its influence among his personal friends, by setting on foot a society for the purpose of prayer and conversation on the Scriptures. It was organized, and consisted of seven members, but after lingering through a term or two it died in 1839.

The necessity of an accurate and critical knowledge of the Bible became more clear to him from this contact with various forms of religious thought. It was his habit, when dressing in the morning, to commit to memory daily a certain number of verses of the New Testament. In this way, before leaving the university, he had gone twice over the English version, and once and a half through the Greek. With his eminent power of arrangement, he mentally combined and recombined all the prominent texts under fixed heads of subjects. He said long afterwards to a friend, that, owing to this practice, no sooner was any Christian doctrine or duty mentioned in conversation or suggested to him by what he was writing, than all the passages bearing on the point seemed to array themselves in order before him.

No change took place in his doctrinal views, which were those of the Evangelical school, with a decided leaning to moderate Calvinism. They were mingled with a rare charity and tolerance, which seem, however, in the excitement of argument to have sometimes failed him. He took a large interest in missionary work, especially in that among the Jews. The society mentioned above, for the short term of its existence, became one of the centres of correspondence which were established in England with the leading foreign mission stations. He strove to interest others in Christian enterprise; but his enthusiasm, though not frozen, was chilled by the apathy and coldness of Oxford. To his excitable and eager temperament, the trim system, the "donnishness" which gave the tone to the life and studies of reading men, were dreary and sleepy, and too hedged in by unelastic rules. With the Utopianism of a young man, he could not at first see that a large and varied society must be governed not by love, but by law; that if the intellect is to be well trained, it must be restricted to a few subjects, and forbidden to travel over wider fields till it has gained sufficient power.

His Christian fervor, for which he found so little food in Oxford, he maintained by bold speaking and brave action.

I rejoice to think of him (writes one of his friends) as I knew him at Oxford—warm, and generous, and noble-hearted; conspicuous for talent, irreproachable in conduct; and, what was most of all valuable, and the most cheering subject of retrospect now, one who carried the banner of the Cross without fear, and was not ashamed of Christ in a place which, though professedly consecrated to His service, offered perhaps more hindrances than helps to a decidedly Christian profession.

He read steadily, though not severely, the usual course. On every side his imagination seems to have lured him away from the confined sphere of university reading to subjects suggested by his studies. This, and, I imagine, a want of enthusiasm for collegiate life and reading, born of regret for the loss of the real profession of his heart, with the addition, perhaps, of his constitutional diffidence, were the reasons why he never aspired to collegiate honors. At first, however, he plunged eagerly, too eagerly, into work. He attended lectures for sixteen hours in the week. He mingled with his necessary labors the recreation which natural history afforded him. He listened with pleasure to the wit, learning, and imagination with which Dr. Buckland charmed his geological class. Plato fascinated him. The poetry, the idealism, the complete power with which the Greek philosopher used the most perfect organ of human thought, delighted a mind essentially imaginative, and a taste which demanded that

thought should be expressed not only in accurate, but in polished language. Yet he saw the defects of Plato, and turned to Aristotle to balance the scale of his thought. He studied both with untiring labor, and he declared many years afterwards that their writings, with those of Edwards, "had passed like the iron atoms of the blood into his mental constitution." Aristotle gradually won a great influence over his intellect, and it is possible again and again to trace in his sermons niceties of mental distinction which owe their subtlety to his intimate knowledge of the "Ethics." With the study of these he combined that of Bishop Butler's works, whose sermons and "Analogy" he seems to have completely mastered. Yet he never lost his passion for Plato. He mentions him as

One of the poets who, when his brain was throbbing, and his mind incapable of originating a thought, and his body worn and sore with exhaustion, made him know what it was to feel the jar of nerve gradually cease, and the darkness in which all life had robbed itself to the imagination become light, discord pass into harmony, and physical exhaustion rise by degrees into the consciousness of power.\*

These words are sufficient to mark how much he owed to the writers whom he revered, and explain much of the deep depression and strong excitement which characterized at once his life and his preaching in after years. If many a time his own imagination was refreshed and kindled by that of another, only too often also for health and mental power his imagination dominated, not over his will, but over his nerves. He was not subdued by the sad and bitter creations of his own heart, but he suffered, and suffered terribly, in conquering them.

During the beginning of his college life, the poets which seem most to have attracted him were Shelley and Coleridge; but the more his thoughtfulness deepened, the more he gave to Wordsworth a veneration which increased as life wore on, and which gained additional depth from the respect which he felt for the poet's character. The following quotation from one of his lectures on Wordsworth will show that this reverence took root at an early period in his mind. It bears testimony also to the influence which Dr. Arnold's life had exercised over him:

I remember myself one of the most public exhibitions of this change in public feeling. It was my lot, during a short university career, to witness a transition and a reaction, or revulsion of public feeling, with respect to two great men, whom I have already mentioned and contrasted. The first of these was one who was every inch a man—Arnold, of Rugby. You will all

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\* *Lectures on Poetry.* Delivered at Brighton.

recollect how in his earlier life Arnold was covered with suspicion and obloquy, how the wise men of that day charged him with latitudinarianism, and I know not with how many other heresies. But the public opinion altered, and he came to Oxford and read lectures on modern history.

Such a scene had not been seen in Oxford before. The lecture-room was too small: all adjourned to the Oxford Theatre; and all that was most brilliant, all that was most wise and most distinguished, gathered together there. He walked up to the rostrum with a quiet step and manly dignity. Those who had loved him when all the world despised him felt that at last the hour of their triumph had come. But there was something deeper than any personal triumph they could enjoy; and those who saw him then will not soon forget the lesson read to them by his calm, dignified, simple step—a lesson teaching them the utter worthlessness of unpopularity or of popularity as a test of manhood's worth.

The second occasion was when, in the same theatre, Wordsworth came forward to receive his honorary degree. Scarcely had his name been pronounced than, from three thousand voices at once, there broke forth a burst of applause, echoed and taken up again and again when it seemed about to die away, and that thrice repeated—a cry in which

Old England's heart and voice unite,  
Whether she hail the wine-cup or the fight,  
Or bid each hand be strong, or bid each heart be light.

There were young eyes there filled with an emotion of which they had no need to be ashamed; there were hearts beating with the proud feeling of triumph, that at last the world had recognized the merit of the man they had loved so long, and acknowledged as their teacher; and yet, when that noise was protracted, there came a reaction in their feelings, and they began to perceive that *that* was not, after all, the true reward and recompense for all that Wordsworth had done for England: it seemed as if all that noise was vulgarizing the poet; it seemed more natural and desirable to think of him afar off in his simple dales and mountains, the high-priest of Nature, weaving in honored poverty his songs to liberty and truth, than to see him there, clad in a scarlet robe, and bespattered with applause. Two young men went home together, part of the way in silence, and one only gave expression to the feelings of the other when he quoted those well-known, trite, and often-quoted lines—lines full of deepest truth:

One self-approving hour whole years outweighs  
Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas,  
And more true joy Marcellus exiled feels,  
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

This extract will give an insight into the manner of his life, and the tendency of his thought during his college career. What he felt for Wordsworth he felt for himself. Popular noise and fame were not his objects. He lived almost in seclusion. He was not extensively known at Oxford. He made but few friends; but those whom he made he clung to tenaciously, and when the circle of his intimacies was completed he did not seek to enlarge it. Few exercised much influence over him; he was rather the centre to which men converged, the magnet by which they were attracted. His acquaintance might have been extended had he joined in the manly sports of Oxford, but he was prevented from

doing so by an injury which he received in his knee at an early period of his residence. The weakness so induced continued for some months, and he never mingled in the athletic exercises of the university.

He joined the Union, however, on his entrance, and spoke frequently. In these speeches he manifested no great oratorical power. They were chiefly argumentative. But the style of speaking then in vogue at the Union did not admit of any display. Mr. Davies once accompanied him to one of the debates, and his account of it is interesting :

On one of the occasions on which I paid Robertson a short visit at Oxford, I went with him to the Union. He was to speak that evening. The subject of debate was the moral tendency or otherwise of the Theatre. Robertson opened the discussion. I sat next to him, and he was somewhat nervous, it being about the second time that he had spoken. Before he got up to speak, pressing his hand upon my knee, he whispered in my ear, "Davies, pray for me." The tenor of his observations was opposed to the idea that theatrical representations could legitimately be made the channel of conveying any really good moral influence or instruction. Robertson was answered by Mr. Ruskin in a very ingenious and somewhat sarcastic speech, which excited much laughter in the room. With considerable circumlocution and innuendo he was describing a certain personage to whose influence he probably thought Robertson had, in his observations, given too much consideration, when Robertson said in my ear, "Why! the man is describing the devil!"

It is not strange that he did not seek oratorical distinction, for it was his habit to check the dominant tendency of his mind when it led to outward brilliancy, and he felt at this time that it was necessary to subdue imagination in order to gain accuracy in argument. Neither did he make any attempt to compete for the prizes which Oxford held out for those things in which he had succeeded in Edinburgh.\* Once he sent in a poem for the Newdigate, but it was unsuccessful. Yet beneath all this reticence, his enthusiasm, his vigor, his overflowing imagination, and exceeding vivid sense of life, flowed like a stream of fire.

It is probable that the clearness, force, and fullness of thought which marked his later eloquence were owing to this wise self-restraint. He did not waste energy when his energy had not sufficient materials to enable him to exhaust a subject. Moreover, even at that time he dreaded the temptations of public honor and popular applause. How

\* "An annual prize is given at Brazenose for the best Latin and English essays during the year. One year there were three candidates so equal in merit that the prize was divided. Of these three Mr. Robertson was one. On another occasion the tutor, the late Rev. T. Bazeley, was so pleased with some of the essays that he had four of the best read out in the Hall by their respective authors. The subject was 'The Uses of Satire,' and Mr. Robertson was one of the chosen number." I am indebted for this note to the Rev. L. B. Garside, one of the successful essayists mentioned above.

clearly he saw these dangers, and how sensitively he shrank from them, may be seen in a letter to his mother, written from Brazenose, on hearing of the great success of one of his friends as a preacher at Cheltenham. It reads like a pre-sentiment of the position in which he himself was to be placed. The opinions he expresses were held by him afterwards with tenfold force at Brighton :

Brazenose, 1839.

MY DEAR LITTLE MOTHER,—I hear of M——'s enthusiastic reception at Cheltenham. I do believe the station of a popular preacher is one of the greatest trials on earth : a man in that position does not stop to soberly calculate how much, or rather how little is done when there appears a great effect, nor to consider how immense is the difference between deeply affecting the feelings and permanently changing the heart. The preacher who causes a great sensation and excited feeling is not *necessarily* the one who will receive the reward of shining as the stars for ever and for ever, because he has turned many to righteousness. Misery is a trial, but it makes this world undesirable, and persecution estranges a man from resting on earthly friends, and forces him to choose One whom he would never have chosen if any other had offered ; but prosperity makes earth a home, and popularity exalts self, and invites compliance to the world. It is the old story of one winter in Capua effecting a ruin for Hannibal, which neither the snow of the Alps nor the sun of Italy, the treachery of the Gauls nor the prowess of the Romans, could achieve.

So passed his life at Oxford, a silent, self-contained, progressive life. There are no materials for a more extended notice, and those who have loved him in life and who love him now in death must fill up the void from the few extracts from letters which follow this chapter, and from the scattered hints which will be found in the letters which he wrote from Brighton. Two of these letters, written to a young friend who was about entering college, are so valuable as his own judgment on his academical career, and so interesting as the view which his manhood took of his youth, that they are inserted here in full :

9 Montpelier Terrace, Brighton, June 8, 1851 ?

MY DEAR KENNION,—It is with some reluctance that I write to you on the subject of your studies ; as, in the first place, I have no right to give an opinion ; and, in the next, I quite feel the truth of what you say in your letter to your mother, that none can decide for you a question with all the bearing of which none but yourself can be acquainted. She is extremely anxious, however, that you should decide rightly, and has written to me to ask what I think. So I am sure you will not think that I am intruding advice. The chief point seems the question of reading for honors. Now I believe with you, that honors make little or nothing in practice, so far as they bear upon a man's future success. That is, the prestige of them does little in life—is forgotten, or slightly looked upon, by the large world. But the mental habits got insensibly during the preparation for them are, I think, incapable of being replaced by any thing ; and this quite independently of whether a man succeeds or fails in his attempt. To my idea the chief advantage is the precluding of discursiveness. For three years or four, a man has an aim



—a long-distant, definite aim. I defy any young man to create this aim for himself. "History, with contemporary authors," is a very vague plan, at best. But grant it well mapped out, still he has chosen his own aim, can not be certain he has chosen well, becomes distrustful of the wisdom of the plan, because his own; will infallibly find that ripened experience will not approve the line chosen, inasmuch as, being untravelled by him, he only selects it by guess. Difficulties break his ardor; he can not struggle with a difficulty while half skeptical as to the unalterable necessity of overcoming it; and at last, having read *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, he finds that, whatever he may have got of bitter experience, one thing he has not got, and that is the steady habit of looking forward to a distant end, unalterably working on it till he has attained it—the habit, in short, of never beginning any thing which is not to be finished. At college I did what you are now going to do—had no one to advise me otherwise; was rather encouraged in it by religious people, who are generally—at least, the so-called religious—the weakest of mankind; and I now feel I was utterly, mournfully, irreparably wrong. The excitement of theological controversy, questions of the day, politics, gleams and flashings of new paths of learning, led me at full speed for three years, modifying my plans perpetually. Now I would give £200 a year to have read on a bad plan, chosen for me, but steadily.

3 Oriel Terrace, March 16, 1852?

MY DEAR KENNION,—It seems to me that your plan would be a good one for passing your vacation. I have no doubt whatever that French will be, on the whole, more valuable to you than German; indeed, German literature and theology, as they are at present, open out to the mind such dark vistas of doubt and Pyrrhonism, that I think you would be wise in postponing the study for some years. I am sure you are right in devoting yourself to mathematics. More than, perhaps, any other study, I believe, they form a masculine and healthy tone of mind. But I fancy that you will find no lectures in Paris on the subject—if by lectures you mean public ones. Private lessons from professors may, of course, be obtained; only it seems to me you would get these more satisfactorily through the medium of English, as part of your mathematical time would be expended in mastering the French terms.

One thing, however, I would strongly recommend, not to put yourself down in Paris, or anywhere else abroad, *alone*. I tried this once in Oxford, during a long vacation, thinking to have more uninterrupted time for study, and found the plan a perfect failure. The mind loses its tension for want of society, its interest in its studies, and that healthy feeling of freshness which comes from alternating study with conversation. And I do not think that it would be good for a mind like yours. The best way of learning French is to get domiciled in a respectable French family,\* where there is not another Englishman. Not in one of those *pensions* which are common in Paris, and filled with English; but a private house, where you are forced into the expression of your ideas and wants in French, if they are to be expressed at all. If this plan should suit you, I would write to a friend in Paris who could give me information on this subject, and would afterwards give you an introduction to Mr. Lovett, the English clergyman there, an excellent man. Pray let me know this.

At the same time this occurs to me as a piece of truth which I myself learned too late. Your object at the university is mental discipline—not merely the acquisition of knowledge. *Do not aim at too much*. Mathematics, classics, and theology are your work for three or four years to come, and I would bend my energies rather upon acquiring these thoroughly than scat-

\* He had himself spent some months in a French family in Paris while waiting for his commission in the army.

tering my efforts over a large surface. I well know the discouragement which there is in feeling how little of all that can be known is within our grasp, and the temptation which there is to try a hundred new fields of knowledge. But the man who succeeds in life is, allowing for the proverbial exaggeration, generally the man *unius libri*. Life is very short; and the painter must not hope to be a good seaman; nor is the clergyman to pine because he can not be the man of literature. I would not be anxious about German at all, but put it resolutely aside till my college career should be over. It can be acquired in after life. Hebrew, Italian, and German I learned after leaving the university, and now that I have them, I do not set much value on them. As to French, if you can conveniently spend some months in the country now, in conjunction with your pursuit of other things, I can see no reason why you should not. Only do not be too anxious about these things. It is surprising how little they tell on the great work of life. I am at this moment preparing for a lecture, or lectures, which I am to give on poetry and the poet's character at the Philosophical Institution. It is true, it is only the gathering up of ideas that have been in my mind unspoken for years; but I have sighed again and again to feel how much I have to reject as unfit for even an enlightened audience, and in a lecture expressly on the topic, and how many days and years have been spent in acquiring and pondering over thoughts that will never tell in this world, and perhaps never will be even communicated. If I were to put what I mean in the shape of advice, derived, too, from experience, I would say this: Take care that the mind does not become too fastidious and refined. It is not a blessing, but a hindrance in the work of life. For a clergyman who has to deal with real beings of flesh and blood, I believe it perfectly possible for too much of a literary turn to mar his usefulness, at the same time that it gives him more keen sensitiveness in perceiving that it is marred. For this reason, if I were in your place, I should be anxious to give to life as much the aspect of reality as possible, which a student's life is apt to keep out of sight. I would read for honors, and sacrifice every thing which interfered with this. But in the vacations I would vary this with systematic visiting of the poor, which, more than any thing else, brings a man into contact with the actual and the real, and destroys fanciful dreams.

Thank you very much for your warm and kind remarks about myself. I would gladly think them true.

As a contrast to the above letters, so defined in view and expression, and exhibiting a mind settled on a firm foundation of fact and thought, the following letter, full of the ferment of a young man's heart, is interesting, and especially so in the dearth of all materials out of which a clear conception of his college life can be formed. It suggests more than it says. It makes plain that he *could not* have, at the time when it was written, pursued those plans of study which his matured manhood looked back to as the wisest. It is at once touching and strange to find in it the old passion for arms developing itself in such an impractical and romantic compromise between his destiny and his desire. It shows how near had been his escape from the school of Mr. Newman, which at first had not only allured his tastes, but had also ministered fuel to his passionate instinct for self-sacrifice. In its evangelical fervor may be seen how liable during his youth

he was to strong reactions. The almost fierceness with which he speaks against the Tract School is proof *in him* of the strength of the attraction it possessed for him, just as afterwards at Brighton his attacks on Evangelicalism are proof of the strength with which he once held to that form of Christianity, and the force of the reaction with which he abandoned it forever. Out of these two reactions—when their necessarily ultra tendencies had been mellowed down by time, emerged at last the clearness and the just balance of principles with which he taught, during 1848 and the following years, at Brighton. He had probed both schools of theological thought to their recesses, and had found them wanting. He spoke of what he knew when he protested against both. He spoke also of what he knew when he publicly recognized the Spirit of all Good moving in the lives of those whose opinions he believed to be erroneous.

Brazenose, Oxford, 1840,  
two or three months before he was ordained. }

MY DEAR FATHER,—I have just received your letter, and take the first opportunity of answering it, as I shall be very much occupied the next few days. Mr. Keary's kind offer\* is a very tempting one, as he is a man I should much like to learn from. But for several reasons I believe I must decline it decidedly. In the first place, if I am to be in England, I should prefer being nearer home, unless there were some very decided reason to think so distant a place as Hull my appointed post. But the chief objection which rose in my mind on receiving the offer, was a feeling which I have long had, but never decidedly been called upon before to express. I am willing to look on it as in part merely a sort of romance, which must give way to any sober consideration that might be offered. But I seem this term to have in measure waked out of a long trance, partly caused by my own gross inconsistencies, and partly by the paralyzing effects of this Oxford delusion-heresy, for such it is I feel persuaded. And to know it a man must live here, and he will see the promising and ardent men sinking one after another in a deadly torpor, wrapped up in self-contemplation, dead to their Redeemer, and useless to his Church, under the baneful breath of this accursed upas-tree. I say accursed, because I believe that St. Paul would use the same language to Oxford as he did to the Galatian Church—"I would they were even cut off which trouble you;" accursed because I believe that the curse of God will fall on it. He has denounced it on the Papal heresy, and He is no respecter of persons, to punish the name and not the reality. May He forgive me if I err, and lead me into all truth. But I do not speak as one who has been in no danger, and therefore can not speak very quietly. It is strange into what ramifications the disbelief of external justification will extend; we *will* make it internal, whether it be by self-mortification, by works of evangelical obedience, or by the sacraments, and that just at the time when we suppose most that we are magnifying the work of our Lord. St. Paul had scarcely reached Corinth before the Galatians, whom he had left behind in a promising state, were "entangled again with the yoke of bondage," though they had stood in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. But this is rather a long digression, and lest the thread of connection should be broken, I must return before I have come to the conclusion of my digression. I was going to say

\* Of his Curacy at Hull.

that after a season of long, utter, and inexpressible darkness, caused principally by my own worldly-mindedness, and not peculiarly enlightened by an examination of the Tract opinions, I have had some weeks of peace which I had never expected to know again, and the desire once more, such as I knew when I first learned the freedom of the Gospel, to live to my Master's glory. May He only grant the wish permanence! But connected with this there is a feeling of a marked path; perhaps merely fanciful, yet our desires must be surely some of the means by which God points out our sphere. When I quitted the army, it was with an inward feeling of a connection with it still unbroken, that the step which, if it had been taken at my own instance, would have been a cowardly desertion of an appointed post, was, even under the circumstances in which it did take place, too remarkable to leave me quite at liberty. Somehow or other I still seem to feel the Queen's broad arrow stamped upon me, and that the men whom in my vanity I imagined I wished to benefit in a red coat, I might now benefit with a better founded hope of usefulness, in the more sombre garb of an accredited ambassador of Christ. In short, if it were practicable, I feel a strong desire for a military chaplaincy. But, however, I am not certain that this would form a title for ordination. On this point I should much like to gain information; but if not, I should prefer a curacy in a situation which would give me an opportunity for fitting myself for this line.

I have had another battle to fight about my not going up for honors. The new tutor sent for me after an essay which I sent in, and battled with me for half an hour, being in great wrath with —, who, he said, ought to have shown more interest. And Whitaker Churton was so eloquent on the subject, that my resolution was well-nigh broken. But I am persuaded it is best as it is. The translation of Romans ix. 22, is quite literal. If — will compare the parallel passage Jer. xviii. from which it seems plain that this was taken, she will see that here, as there, the leading idea is God's endurance, and sovereign right of making the clay which was originally a marred vessel, a perfect one; and that it would be a perversion to infer from the expressions "fitted to destruction," that they were so fitted by Him. At least, that is my view; but the original is quite as difficult to understand as the translation. The letters I will send the first opportunity, or bring, if I come home.

Best love to my dear little motheretta and the young ones.

It remains to notice the circumstances which marked the passing of his degree examination. He did not go up for a class; but his scholarship was so sound, and his knowledge of his subjects so accurate, that on the first day the examiners wrote to his tutor, Mr. Churton, to request that he would induce his pupil to compete for honors. By some mistake the letter did not reach its destination soon enough, and he finished his examination in ignorance of the desire of the examiners. They then urged him to undergo a fresh examination for a class. He refused, and was given a day to resume his refusal. He again refused, but the examiners, according to the Oxford custom in such cases, put him into the fourth class.

For some time before his degree, and for a short time afterwards, he read for his ordination examination. Writing to his mother, he says:

Brazenose, 1840.

I am now reading pretty steadily for ordination, and feel every day more and more the depths of my ignorance. I am persuaded that the surest way for a man to be satisfied with his own attainments is to read little; for the more he reads, the more he sees the boundless extent of what there is to be known, and the circumscribed nature of his own attainments. However, perseverance and prayer may do much. I am now reading the early Church history with Golightly, which is a very great advantage, as he has a fund of general information, and is a close reader. Jones and I also read together. This plan, if not too exclusively followed, is a very useful one. The conversation which arises on the points of interest strikes, sometimes one, sometimes the other, and as you go on, tends to fix the subject more deeply on the mind, and besides gives habits of accuracy. I have had several communications (official) from the Bishop of Winchester, and all at present seems settled for me; but even now, if it be not my fate, I hope I may be prevented going there.

A letter from Mr. Churton, his tutor, to Captain Robertson, gives an account of his studies, and his subjects of thought at this time:

My chief acquaintance with your son was in the summer of '40 or '41, being together in Oxford, and having then much personal intercourse with him: no letters passed between us, though I can even now recall many interesting conversations. We were all alone; frequently, besides our college servants, there was no one else but he and I within its walls. Many an hour, morning and evening, we paced its quadrangle, in discourse and inquiries as interesting, I believe, to myself, though many years his senior, as to him. The subjects which then came before us, besides others of a more directly religious character, were chiefly the following:

1. The deference and amount of implicit obedience due to college authorities, even by parties already of age, but subjected to college discipline; and the presumption that our elders are right in such and such injunctions, inasmuch as we may ordinarily assume that years and longer experience insure greater practical wisdom.

2. The position and foundation of the Tractarian movement, as to how far such views and practices were to be found in, or were sanctioned by, the primitive and early Church; and whether the Church of the first three centuries was a safe and sufficient guide to the leaders and writers of that movement. Hereupon, we not only read together Taylor's *Ancient Christianity*, and verified and compared his passages and quotations from the Fathers, but also read several whole treatises from which his extracts were derived. Besides these points, and others involved in these, I can call to mind many interesting inquiries, critical and practical, as to various texts of Scripture, and many conversations on matters of Christian trial and temptation. I should say that the salient points and features in his character at that period were earnest diligence and eagerness towards the object and end of life; a thirsting inquiry after truth, especially moral and sacred truth; a highly active mind, metaphysical and yet practical; and a devout disposition of heart, opening not only to its own wants, but also to the wants of others. I remember in particular his expressing to me his delight in Bishop Andrews's devotion, as opening before him a new and wide field of both intercessory supplication and individual self-abasement.

During this period he was seeking for a title; and part of a letter to his old friend, Mr. Moncrieff, fitly closes the sketch of his college career:

Brazenose, May 26, 1840.

MY DEAR MONCRIEFF,— \* \* \* I am glad to hear that your ministerial labors are begun. May the Lord of the harvest prosper your work, and ripen the sheaves for his floor. I can not conceive a more exalted joy than the being permitted to see the fruit of our toil in the conversion of the thoughtless to our dear Master. The prospect we have, as far as human eye can judge, is a stormy one, and predicts more controversy than edification. It is impossible to look round on the strange aspect of all things—the Church reeling to her centre with conflicting opinions; in all circles, whether political or religious, minds unsettled and anticipating a crisis; “men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking for those things which are coming upon the earth”—without feeling that our path will be a rugged one, and that the hour of trial is at hand. Do not you think so, even without any excess of foreboding despondency? To me every day brings increasing conviction of it, especially when I see the rapidly developed working of the Tract views, which amount to nothing less than a direct, or, as Hooker would call it, an “indirect denial of the foundation.” Our motto must be, morning and evening, and converted into a prayer, “Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” But how strangely that yoke steals round our necks, even when we think we are most entirely free from any idea of self-justification.

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*Letters from May, 1838, to June, 1840.*

## I.

Brazenose, May, 1838.

I have become quite an owl, staying at home all day, and not moving till the evening. Still I get very little done in the day, though my rapidly approaching little-go examination should make me read hard. Scarcely a word yet have I prepared for it. Not even logic, which is but just begun. Plato is the fascination, and a magnificent fellow he is—not quite so great though as the — school would make him out. I expect that we shall, in a few years, have him much more studied than he ever has been here yet—Aristotle being all in all. Sewell is giving public lectures on “The Republic” (which is the work I am reading), contemplating it as an anticipation of the Christian Church! He labored very hard one day to prove that the study of Plato had always preceded, or been contemporaneous with not only the rise of intellect, but the revival of the Christian religion: another time he said that the esoteric method of Plato was on the same principle as that which influenced the Divine mind to reveal his truths in the Bible in an unconnected form; with several other wonderful discoveries, “*Quæ*,” as the Latin Gr. *poetically* says, “*nunc perscribere longum est.*” My friends tell me I am on the high-road to Puseyism, loving Plato, and reading Wordsworth. *Μη γένοιτο!* There is something excessively chilling in the donnishness of Oxford, which insinuates its unlovely spirit everywhere—lecture, chapel, pulpit, Union, conversation, retirement—one feels inclined to say, “Shall I ever love a human being again with any thing warmer than a vegetable attachment?” It is just like the contents of my gigantic brown pitcher last winter—though within eighteen inches of the fire all day, one globe of ice. Not very elegant or classical, you will say. Well, then, Medusa’s head, rockifying all that comes near it. Churton took me down, about a fortnight ago, to Ilsley, the rectory of his brother-in-law, where he did duty. The family were away, and we, with two other Oxford men, had the house to ourselves. We all agreed that

the distance of eighteen miles had a marvellous effect in unpetrifying us—so much as scarcely to recognize one another. Thanks to God, there are a few spirits of a very different cast here! They must be indeed on fire with a heavenly flame to preserve the warmth they do—two or three of my most intimate and valuable friends especially. And they will soon see their Master coming to emancipate them from this unintelligible world. If we could but all say, with heart and soul, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

## II.

Brazenose, Oxford, May 23, 1838.

MY DEAR FATHER,— \* \* \* I had wished to reply more fully to your two letters for which I am in your debt, both of which, especially the last, gave me much comfort and pleasure. His ways are indeed wonderful—*how* wonderful, eternity alone can show, where we shall see the connection of what we are pleased to call trivial events, with His most stupendous schemes, and all that is dark and difficult and melancholy in this unintelligible world, all that gives our presumptuous reasoning hard thoughts of God, all that has grieved and disappointed and misanthropized, will be fully explained, and merged in one unclouded blaze of glory. The time may be much nearer than we expect. The last words of our Lord to his Church, uttered by the feeble lips of his last apostle, grayheaded and already bending over the tomb, were—“Behold, I come quickly.” I wish we could with our whole heart and soul repeat the answer, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” But we are most of us too devotedly buried in the shadowy nothings of time and space, and too deeply attached to them, to avoid feeling, in the very spirit of unbelief, that it is a day whose postponement is to be desired, since *they* will be torn from our grasp forever. \* \* \*

I am now endeavoring to read hard, since I have to take or to try to take my “little go” this term, and as I had not a word prepared at the commencement, and have only just begun, it will be rather hard work, especially the logic, agreeable as it is. Plato, too, which I am reading in lecture together with other occupations, takes up not a little of my time.

## III.

B. N. C., October 13, 1838.

MY DEAR DAVIES,—I write in a hurry, and shall, therefore, be concise. On the coach to-day was an infidel, with whom I got into conversation. His views were neological in regard to Scripture, and utilitarian in regard to morals. After much discussion, in which, thank God, I was much helped by books I have been reading lately, he introduced the subject of supernatural appearances. These, he said, could be accounted for on three grounds; but there was a fourth class which can not be so accounted for, but this we have no right to call supernatural, as we know nothing, and future scientific discoveries might prove it to be quite in the course of nature. I knew what was coming, but determined that he should make the application himself, and begged him to be more explicit. He spoke of ghosts. I told him I had never seen one, and was not particularly interested to prove their existence. After a silence, I told him that if he would not require a Quixotic expedition on behalf of ghosts, he might have an apparent advantage; but fairly avow that he wanted to deny the fact of recorded miracles openly, as a man, we might talk over the question. He seemed ashamed, and said a few words about his not meaning exactly that. The conversation dropped till we got to Oxford, when I suddenly spoke seriously to him. He was affected, and shook hands, saying he would give the world to believe it all; that his father was a religious man, and that his dying wish had been that he should follow his steps. I asked if he had ever asked a blessing on his inquiries, for he

had read much and controversially. He replied that he had, but that it had had as much effect as if he had prayed to a stone. At parting, he asked me earnestly to recommend him any book I could, and he would promise to read it.

## IV.

Brazenose, November 4, 1838.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,—First, I must tell you that you would have had a letter from me in the last packet, but that a party of banditti took upon them to intercept it in its passage through Rodney House, Cheltenham, on the plausible pretext of its being written on thick paper. After I, of all correspondents the worst, had actually summoned resolution to write and dispatch a letter, it was very hard to lose the credit of it. I will try to make amends now. Your packet was sent to me yesterday—a delightful surprise. I can not tell you how I felt as if with you in your expressions of loneliness and sorrow at our bitter parting. I felt as if I had never loved you till that moment, when we saw the *Sovereign* bearing noiselessly away across the apparently boundless expanse, till she was lost to us forever in the distance. My poor dear mother, it must be trouble for her to look to five years' separation, when one appears to me an age. Such moments remind us with irresistible eloquence that we have no abiding-place of rest here. I wish it were not a mere vain reminding, but a practical lesson, which might lead us to secure another home.

The reading your letters, which seemed fresh from your hand, recalled, with a cold feeling of sadness, the long weary miles of water which separate us, how long God alone knows; perhaps forever in this world. But let us both pray earnestly that the separation may not be long, and that even in this world we may renew the dearer relationship than that of earthly brotherhood. I am getting now a very delightful little circle of friends around me at Oxford, and hope soon not to number among my acquaintance one man whose society I could afford to give up. There is one in whom I have been deeply interested; a married man with a family, his wife a very superior woman. He has been reading very hard, hoping to take his degree; but, to my sorrow, failed in his examination—to him a severe trial on many accounts. I called, he was out; but I found her very much overpowered, and suffering intense anxiety for her husband's bitter disappointment. I sat some time, hoping to soothe; his tread was heard at the front door, and the whole woman was changed. I did not hear another sigh, and she calmly and quietly spoke on the subject, and held up a brighter view of it than she herself saw. The hour of weakness was past, and the deep, strong current of a woman's affection bore her up. It was the reed rising from the storm when the oak was shattered.

This is a strain of romance almost like the expressions of boyish days, instead of my brown, seared tint of three-and-twenty. Alas! how changed the spirit of our dream, our pleasant Pittville walks, only the remembrance of the happy hours we spent there with the —, etc. But joy's recollections are no longer joys; yet sorrow's memory is sorrow still. Now I wish the thousand leagues that separate us could be traversed as rapidly in body as fancy; for I should be happily with you this instant. But our only absent one is not forgotten. We do and will remember him in our prayers. God bless you, my dearest brother.

## V.

July, 1839.

MY DEAR DAVIES,— \* \* \* Thank you—most sincerely thank you—for your kind offer and invitation; but I may not accept it. I am endeavoring to make up for the reading which I have lost in the restless and unsettled state of mind of the last year and a half. I confess that every coach which passes through to Cheltenham gives me an involuntary pang—partly from re-



morse for misspent hours, partly from thoughts of the future, partly, and not least, from a wish to be at home. But it may not be; and, besides, I wish to have some solitude to calm myself to a contemplation of the rapidly approaching time, when, if ever, I must declare that I feel moved by the Spirit of God to be his ambassador. To do this, with all the whirl and throbbings of an unbridled imagination, and worldly feeling rife in my breast, is a thing too horrible to be thought of steadily—*μη γένοιτο!* I do not propose remaining in Oxford the whole vacation, though I believe it would be better for myself to do it. Part of the time I intend to pass with a friend, who failed last examination for his pass. It was from deficiency in Latin writing; and it has been so strongly put before me that I might be of some service to him, that I think I shall go over there. Do not, of course, mention this, as it would seem very indelicate if he were to learn the reason which decided me. \* \* \* I am much interested in your account of the difficulties of Miss —; but how much better they are for her spiritual life than a smooth and easy path. The Christian's aim is victory, not freedom from attack; and a soldier can not learn to fight by pondering over maps and plans of campaigns in his barrack-room. It must be on the field of blood, and in the lonely bivouac; without real trial, how soon we find rust upon our arms and sloth upon our souls, and the paltry difficulties of common life weigh like chains upon us, instead of being brushed away like cobwebs.

## VI.

September, 1839.

MY DEAR HATCHARD,— \* \* \* Now, then, in a very few words (for I have not really time for more), to express the immediate object of my letter. And yet it is rather hard, for a set epistle of congratulation, like one of condolence, is likely to be very stiff. However, each year as it rolls by seems to rivet with more enduring importance a day of anniversary—more especially one of an event which was the ushering into an eternity of either misery or joy a responsible creature. As boys, we have looked forward to them as the occasion of a holiday and juvenile ball. As men, we look back on them as so many waymarks on which are noted the sins and mercies of successive years. They were seasons of unmingled pleasure—now of self-reproach and melancholy retrospect. Opportunities irreparably suffered to slip by—years of self-indulgence—bad habits formed—friends alienated—others wantonly grieved—in some instances the hour of reparation and reconciliation lost forever, because they have gone to their long home. Two lines in the frontispiece of a little hymn-book, which I have not seen since five years old, seem branded with letters of fire on my memory:

Oh! if she would but come again,  
I think I'd vex her so no more!

United with all this, the reflection that we were not only not forwarding the eternal interests of those with whom we were, but actually blocking up for them the entrance to the already narrow path—with all this coming in a torrent on the memory, what can a birthday be to a reflecting being but a season of deep humiliation and abasement before his Creator, his Benefactor, and his Judge? But, blessed be God, these are not his only titles, or there would be nothing for us but the blackness of darkness forever. I trust and pray that we both may feel and know with respect to the fearful catalogue of past years that He has, as a Redeemer, “blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, and taken it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” If so, your twenty-second birthday can not but remind you of a closer and loftier union than that which you entered on as to-morrow, a connection with dear but earthly parents; it will tell you of a more real commencement of existence—a *παλλαγενεσία*, by which you were permitted to call God your

father, Jesus Christ your brother, an innumerable company of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect your society, and Heaven your home. Then, as the best wish I can offer you, let me send the concluding verses of the third chapter of Epistle to the Ephesians as a birthday prayer.

## VII.

Brazenose, June 24.

MY DEAREST BROTHER,—I sit down to give an hour or two to conversation with you, although so far away; so I shall just let my pen run on, as perhaps it will, without point or connection. It is now the long vacation, yet I am staying up here, within the hoary walls of Brazenose, all alone, partly for the purpose of reading, partly for the sake of gaining the natural tone of mind after a time of great excitement, no less than twenty-five ladies in my room—only conceive. One day we went to Blenheim, a beautiful, but melancholy place; for it is fast going to decay from the neglect of its ruined owner, the Duke of Marlborough. The grounds are magnificent and extensive, the house contains some of the finest pictures in England, especially a Madonna by Carlo Dolci, which alone would afford hours of enjoyment.\* There is an indescribable tranquillity, with an unearthly look of rapt contemplation, in the countenance and the whole effect, which makes you feel an involuntary awe; and it is curious to observe how the most talkative groups of visitors, one after another, were stilled into silence before it. In the evening we went down to the river, it being the last night of the boat-races, in order to see the Brazenose boat come up in triumphal procession, as the head of the river for the year, all the others raising their oars and cheering as we passed. The next day was the commemoration. Honorary degrees were conferred upon Wordsworth and Herschel, who were immensely cheered: then the prize essays and poems were recited. The next day we all rowed down to Newnham in an eight-oar: the day lovely. Newnham, the seat of the Archbishop of York, is a beautiful place, rendered still more so by the many pic-nic parties, who had gone down, like ourselves, to how the lions to their lady friends, who, with their light dresses, formed a lovely contrast to the green sward and sylvan shade. We came back by night, the splash of our oars keeping regular time to the more musical strains of the Canadian Boat-Song and *La Dame Blanche*, with which the ladies solaced our toil. On Friday they again breakfasted with me—the vice-principal of my college, and nine ladies. My room, decorated with flowers, in silver vases, before each lady an elegant bouquet; and as I was allowed the use of the college plate, the table exhibited a gorgeous display. The rest of our time was spent in seeing Oxford. But, alas! the time came for parting, and a melancholy party we were on the last morning: we had been so entirely together; every one resolved with all their heart to please and be pleased, that we seemed like old friends, instead of which, as in several instances to myself, the brothers of the ladies were not known before. So we shook hands, spoke not a word of sorrow, and I returned to my lonely den, rendered doubly so by the shadowy outline of bright forms and lovely faces which so lately beamed in it, and still, to fancy, seemed to hover round. I have received the kindest invitations to spend the vacation in different places—Germany, Isle of Wight, Lancashire, London, Cumberland, Malvern, Islay, Monmouth—forcing the grateful conviction that somehow or other, if I am a friend to no one, I have many friends to me.

I've heard of hearts unkind; kind deeds  
With coldness still returning.  
Alas! the gratitude of man  
Has oftener left me mourning.

That is the genuine, manly feeling of dear old Wordsworth.

\* This picture is alluded to in his *Lectures on Poetry*.

## CHAPTER II.

Passage from Collegiate to Active Life.—Growth of his Christian Faith.—Early Sadness of his Heart.—Ordination.—Curacy at Winchester.—First Appearance in the Pulpit.—Difficulties of his Work.—Letter recalling his Life in Winchester.—Success as a Minister.—Description of him by a Friend.—Spiritual Life.—Devotional Reading.—Prayer.—Preaching.—Despondency arising from Illness.—Examination for Priest's Orders.—Close of Ministerial Life at Winchester.—Continental Tour.—Geneva and its Parties.

Letters from September 17, 1840, to August 3, 1841.

MR. ROBERTSON passed out of collegiate into active life, out of youth into manhood, with a grave and awful sense of responsibility. His character and Christian principles, though unannealed as yet, had been partially moulded into form, and it is necessary to trace their formation up to this point, if his after-life and more complete development are to become intelligible.

It was but slowly that his faith, always more intuitive than dependent upon "evidences," had become, consciously to himself, a power in his life. Various outward events and influences had assisted in developing its germ into flower and fruit. At Saxmundham, while yet a boy, he had been wonderfully preserved from a sudden death;\* and deep gratitude to God was awakened in his heart. There also one of his sisters had died, and her happiness and peace in dying had impressed him strongly. At Bury St. Edmund's, the seclusion in which he had lived had driven him in upon himself, and the form of his solitary thought had been determined by the perusal of Abbott's "Way to do Good"—a book he valued so highly, that afterwards, at Brighton, when he felt the hardening effect of constant preaching, he read it again, as a healthy incitement to activity. At Paris, whither he went for a few months after his withdrawal from the law as a profession, his preservation from the "gross pollution" of that city—a preservation which he calls incomprehensible—increased his faith in the personal watchfulness and love of God. At Cheltenham, he imputes to the preaching of Mr. Boyd and Mr. Close, and to the society of many Christian friends, the fervor as well as the sober resolution for the service of Christ with which he began his college career.

\* He was in a covert, walking just in front of his father. A pheasant rose. He dropped to let his father fire. The father missed the bird, and was in the act of discharging his second barrel, when, to his horror, he suddenly saw his son's head at the very muzzle of his gun!

Consistently and actively among the temptations of Oxford, he had lived a Christian life, and grown in Christian experience, and now his realization of Christ as his Saviour and his personal Friend was as deep and vivid as the love and labor which grew out of it into ministerial fruitfulness. This was the cumulative result of many years of prayer and struggle.

To this resting-place God brought him not only through the means of external influences, and of his own thirst after righteousness, but also through the natural drift of his character. In boyhood and youth, his religion, before it had consciously taken a distinctively Christian form, manifested itself in two ways—as hatred and resistance of evil, and as a reverence and effort for purity. He wrote in after years, and it was true of his whole life :

There is something of combativeness in me which prevents the whole vigor being drawn out, except when I have an antagonist to deal with, a falsehood to quell, or a wrong to avenge. Never till then does my mind feel quite alive. Could I have chosen my own period of the world to have lived in, and my own type of life, it should be the feudal ages, and the life of a Cid, the redresser of wrongs.

This side of his religion, the old religion of chivalry, made him at school the defender of the oppressed, the bold denouncer of all that was untrue, and the champion of justice among his fellows. There was mingled with this, during his youth, that slight tinge of noble superstition which made at once the strength and the weakness of ancient religious chivalry. In a letter written from Brighton, he relates and comments on an instance of this.

I remember when a very, very young boy, going out shooting with my father, and praying, as often as the dogs came to a point, that he might kill the bird. As he did not always do this, and as sometimes there would occur false points, my heart got bewildered. I believe I began to doubt sometimes the efficacy of prayer, sometimes the lawfulness of field sports. Once, too, I recollect when I was taken up with nine other boys at school to be unjustly punished, I prayed to escape the shame. The master, previously to flogging all the others, said to me, to the great bewilderment of the whole school : "Little boy, I excuse you ; I have particular reasons for it," and, in fact, I was never flogged during the three years I was at that school. That incident settled my mind for a long time ; only I doubt whether it did me any good, for prayer became a charm. I fancied myself the favorite of the Invisible. I knew that I carried about a talisman unknown to others which would save me from all harm. It did not make me better ; it simply gave me security, as the Jew felt safe in being the descendant of Abraham, or went into battle under the protection of the Ark, sinning no less all the time.

The other side of his boyish religion—the adoration of purity—he symbolized for himself in Womanhood. Under

this symbol he worshipped, with a boy's unquestioning worship, his Ideal. Like a boy, too, he transferred to the form all the excellence of the Idea. Recalling afterwards these early days of chivalrous imagination and romance, he writes in one of his letters :

The beings that floated before me, robed in vestures more delicate than mine, were beings of another order. The thought of one of them becoming mine was not rapture but pain. \* \* \* At seven years old, woman was a sacred dream, of which I would not talk. Marriage was degradation. I remember being quite angry on hearing it said of a lovely Swede—the loveliest being I ever saw—that she was likely to get married in England. She gave me her hair, lines, books, and I worshipped her only as I should have done a living rainbow, with no further feeling. Yet I was then eighteen, and she was to me for years nothing more than a calm, clear, untroubled fiord of beauty, glassing heaven, deep, deep below, so deep that I never dreamed of an attempt to reach the heaven. So I lived. I may truly say that my heart was like the Rhone as it leaves the Lake of Geneva.

As he grew up he surrounded his conception of womanhood with all the sacredness of his highest religious aspirations, while his reverence for this conception tended in itself to exalt his desire for holiness of life, and to keep him true to his ideal. In one of his lectures at Brighton, he says :

It is feelings such as these, call them romantic if you will, which I know, from personal experience, can keep a man all his youth through, before a higher faith has been called into being, from every species of vicious and low indulgence in every shape and every form.

And this youthful chastity of spirit was never stained in life. It is impossible not to feel that to this he owed his keen insight into moral truth; the lucid power with which he solved spiritual problems and points in the casuistry of the heart; that clear analysis of apparently conflicting truths, which men said came upon them like a revelation, and the bright and tender sympathy and penetration with which he recognized the good, and by which he recoiled from the evil of the men he met. And now, at his entrance into manhood, both these ideas, which formed, as it were, his natural religion, became, and continued always to be, the foundations of his spiritual religion. He found them realized for him in Christ the perfect Man. His writings teem with glowing descriptions of Christ as the great Vindicator of all wrong; of Christ in his contest with the spirit of the world, of oppression, of hypocrisy. To Christ also, as the spotless Purity, he transferred his young belief in the entire stainlessness of womanhood. He saw in Him not only perfect manhood, but perfect womanhood. One of his ablest sermons, on the Glory

of the Virgin Mother,\* is devoted to the elaboration of this thought.

The prevailing tone of his mind on entering the ministry was a tone of sadness. This was due partly to his imagination—an imagination so creative that it gave form and color to every thought, to every thing he saw and read, and which, when permitted to roam unchecked, wandered on for hours; thought suggested thought, and feeling feeling, till a whole wild landscape of ideas and their forms grew up before his eyes. He could not live in so ideal a world, in which he became vividly conscious of a fuller life of genius than he could embody, without becoming at times the victim of a vague sadness, the vagueness of which was its greatest pain.

Add to this an extremely sensitive organization, and it is no wonder that both feeling and thought, in this continual battle between his nature and his will, were, when he was far too young, preternaturally excited, and that he rapidly lost the vigorous health and strength of his boyhood. His spirit consumed his body.

Such an organization increased, if it did not half create, a religious sadness—the sadness of one whose spiritual ideal was always infinitely beyond his practice. He never was content; he never thought that he had attained, rather that he was lagging far behind in Christian life. Everywhere this is reflected in his letters. His feeling of it was so strong, that it seemed rather to belong to a woman than to a man; and at certain times the resulting depression was so great, that he fell into a morbid hopelessness.

In addition to these sadnesses, he had some real grounds for melancholy. Events had occurred during his college career which had shaken him terribly. He speaks in one of his later letters of a shock received in youth, from which he never altogether recovered; but which, as it was the first, carved its story most deeply into his heart. And yet all his characteristic sadness was balanced by the fullness of life and appreciation of the beautiful which afterwards more fully distinguished him. The result of this was often joyousness of spirit, an elasticity of heart which enabled him to rebound from sorrow, a power of realizing all the happy points of existence, and a delight in all that was fresh and pure in humanity and nature, so keen, so delicate, and so self-forgetful, that, till the terrible pain of the disease which killed him began to torture him day and night, he never lost youthfulness of heart. "The woof of life is dark," he says, "but it is shot with a warp of gold."

\* Second Series, p. 383.

With this character he went up for ordination, and in the very fact of his ordination is partly, also, to be found the cause of the sorrowful sternness with which he began his ministerial work; for it was the final and irrevocable seal set to his self-devoted sacrifice of the profession of the army to that of the Church.

On Sunday, July 12, 1840, he was ordained by the Bishop of Winchester, who, on presenting his papers to him, gave him as his motto the text from which Mr. Nicholson, his future rector, had preached the ordination sermon, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." He had himself chosen as his text for the short sermon which the candidates write, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." "It was chosen," he says, "as peculiarly characteristic of a minister's distinctive mission." The motto of the Bishop and his own choice of a text were certainly characteristic of the frame of mind in which he commenced his duties. The enthusiasm which he felt bordered on the stern devotion of Loyola, and had, like his, a soldier's spirit at its root. The trumpet-sound of that selected verse may, perhaps, have stirred his heart with an association of the *réveillé* he had so often heard as a boy. It is necessary to say once more, because it is one of the key-notes of his character, that all his life-long he was a soldier at heart. Again and again he expresses his conviction that, in a military life, the highest self-sacrifice he was capable of could alone have been accomplished. Those who have heard him speak of battle—battle not as an incident of mere war, but as the realization of death for a noble cause—will remember how his lips quivered, and his eyes flashed, and his voice trembled with restrained emotion. Unconsciously to himself, the ring of his words, the choice of his expressions, his action even in common circumstances, his view of the Universe and of Humanity, were influenced and colored by the ideal he had formed of a soldier's life, by the passionate longing of his youth to enter it, and by the bitterness of the regret with which he surrendered it.

It must not be thought, however, that that bitterness diminished in the least his Christian devotion or his eagerness in Christian work. It was, on the contrary, transmuted into energy for Christ. The strength of character which made him feel so keenly the surrender of one profession made him adopt another with fervor. He transferred the same spirit of sacrifice with which he would have died for men in battle to a more hidden and a diviner warfare. His feeling of the solemnity of his duty was profound. One who knew him well says:

He took on himself the office of a minister with the keenest sense of responsibility and the most perfect devotion of will. He desired to emulate the spirit of St. Paul. I was not present when he was ordained, but I heard from those who were that his agitation was overpowering. When I saw him the day after, he looked as if he had been through an illness. He seemed quite shattered.

He had been given a title by Mr. Nicholson, rector of the united parishes of St. Maurice, St. Mary Kalendar, and St. Peter Colebrook, Winchester. These parishes had been unfortunate. The predecessor of Mr. Nicholson had been suspended for drunkenness. There were not a hundred people who attended the church. But with Mr. Nicholson's arrival a new spirit came into the place, and the parish church had been enlarged and rebuilt when Mr. Roberson, July 19, 1840, entered on his ministerial duties. The impression which his earnestness made is detailed in the following letter from one who was then a teacher in the Sunday-school:

I met Mr. Robertson for the first time on the morning of July 19, 1840, in the Sunday-school. His bearing on this occasion made such an impression on my mind, that I shall ever vividly remember it. In place of the stiffness and timidity usually observable in the first ministrations of a young clergyman, he fell into his place with the ease and freedom of one who has worn his armor long. I recollect that after Mr. Nicholson had formally introduced him to all the teachers as fellow-laborers, he seated himself on the stool by my side, and after some remarks to myself on the different systems of education, in the course of which he expressed his deep sense of the value of Sunday-schools, he leaned forward and addressed my class (about a dozen big, rough boys), urging them, in his own peculiar strain of loving earnestness, to live as Christians, concluding with these words: "Believe me, there is nothing else worth living for, is there, Mr. —?" turning to me for confirmation. This was his first address as a minister, and his matter and manner were both equally remarkable.

He preached his first sermon in the evening, on the text, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," etc., Isa. lv. 1. He was at once perfectly at home in the pulpit. His sermon, a fervid echo of the prophet's invitation, was not merely *read*, but *preached*, with an eloquence, confidence of power, and self-possession I have never witnessed in any similar instance. On the following Sunday he preached on, "Thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity," etc.; and his confidence as a preacher had so increased, that he used considerable action. On the third Sunday he preached on, "And he brought him to Jesus." In this sermon he repeated several times, as the burden of his discourse, "He brought his brother to Jesus." The selection of these three texts for his first sermons will afford some clue to the prevailing tone of his mind at that time. They were made the occasions for a full and forcible declaration of Evangelical views, though unusually free from the peculiar phraseology of the school which has been so named.

It was not, however, all smooth sailing. There were still, among a very poor population of from three to four thousand, much infidelity and immorality—the children of a long neglect. Violent opposition was made to the building of a new church, and still more violent to the establishment of paro-



chial schools, not only by a number of small shop-keepers, who were bitterly prejudiced and ignorant, but also by the old High-Church gentry of the parish, who looked upon schools as dangerous innovations.

Among such rough elements did the young minister begin his work. The difficulties of his position were his stimulus. He labored with all his heart; and especially among the poor and working-men, was so earnest, so courteous, so eager to serve, that in a great measure he overcame their prejudices. He was self-devoted, but repelled the praise which named him so.

I would rather be doing my little nothing (he writes to Mr. Davies) in Christ's vineyard, than enjoying the wealth or honor of the country. It is a weary wandering this, but it is a great comfort it will not last long, and there will be an end of battling with a sinful heart, when the resurrection of the Lord is perfected in the resurrection of his members. I have been reading lately "Brainerd's Life," which, to my taste, stands alone as a specimen of biography. "To believe, to suffer, and to love," was his motto, like that of the early Christians; but with us, if a minister gives himself a little exertion, a hundred voices flatter him with an anxiety for his life, as if a fireside, plentiful table, and warm clothing were compatible with the idea of suicide. Brainerd did spend himself in his Master's service, and his *was* self-denial—and a self-denial which there was none to witness or admire.

He seems thus from the beginning to have felt the depression arising from the unthankful nature and severity of his work; but he found in his rector a faithful friend, whose sympathy cheered and whose experience guided him. The following letter, written to Mrs. Nicholson on hearing of her husband's death, recalls the writer's life at Winchester:

Cheltenham, May 26, 1844?

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I do not hesitate for one moment whether I ought to intrude upon your sadness or not, for we are mourners together. In your most affectionate husband I have lost a friend, and it is my sad privilege to write to you in your bereavement. I was startled and solemnized by hearing who had been taken from us—for I never dreamed that I should be his survivor—and all our happy Sunday evenings, and country walks, and ministerial union, came rushing over my recollection. Oh, what days those were—and what kindness did you both show to me, as a brother and sister and more! After a moment of bitterness, almost the very first thought that rose on my heart was, his work is done, and done well; and I felt roused and invigorated, instead of depressed, by the remembrance that we have a work to do, and the night cometh when no man can work. I can not look back to all the past without feeling that his memory is a soothing thing to us all, and almost longing that our own course was as fairly run, and all as safe and secure as it is with him. I preached immediately after I heard the news on 1 John ii. 15, 16, 17, and there was not a little reality and earnestness imparted to what I said, from recollecting how powerfully that lesson had just been impressed upon my heart, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof;" but the next words forced on my mind the feeling that nothing now can quench his immortality. Work done—that lasts, and nothing else, through

the wreck of hopes, and the dissolving of this strange universe—"he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

What soothing, ennobling recollections yours will be when the first stunning sensation is over! We want such recollections to nerve and brace us for our work. Struggling, battling, conquering, and those that have passed into eternity looking on—the cloud of witnesses. I too have just lost a dear one, and we weep together; but one feeling must be uppermost with us both, that we have deliberately chosen the cross for our portion, and it is no marvel if some of its blood is sprinkled on us. The cross is dear, come how and where it will.

And now, my dear Mrs. Nicholson, will you ever come and spend some time with us, and try the kindest welcome of one who revered and loved your departed husband? It will be a joy to us if you will; I do not mean just now, for your wound is perhaps too fresh for that; but whenever you will. Pray let us hear from you as soon as you can write without pain.

The friendship which this letter proves supplied him with the external sympathy he needed to meet the difficulties of his work. His success in conjunction with Mr. Nicholson was as great as he could expect.

We have just had (he writes in November, 1840) to open two churches at once, instead of one, in which my rector and myself exchange duties, and they are both crowded, literally to overflowing. We have a lecture in the week, and two adult classes for men and women, the attendance at which increases weekly, and our communicants have been doubled in the last three months. So that amidst much dislike and disgust from the old High-Church gentry of the town, many of the common people hear us gladly, and some of the upper classes are beginning to manifest curiosity and interest. My rector is every thing I could wish, as a guide and as a friend. His kindness and that of his wife are unbounded. \* \* \* Both he and I are occupied at once to the utmost, and can not spare a day away from the parish.

He devoted much of his time to the Sunday-schools, and made the teaching systematic and useful by training the teachers himself. He supplied them with questions on the Epistle for the day, the answers to which they were to work out for themselves. He then went over the results with them during the week. In this way he preserved their power of individual thought—a point on which all through his life he laid the greatest stress. In October, 1840, he wrote to a friend as if he were well satisfied with his work:

With regard to my own work, I trust it is not entirely unblest, though it might well deserve to be so. We have much in this parish to encourage, and I believe the only discouragement is the sloth of my own heart, which too often produces despondency. Still, every day convinces me more and more that there is one thing, and but one, on earth worth living for—and that is to do God's work, and gradually grow in conformity to his image by mortification, and self-denial, and prayer. When that is accomplished, the sooner we leave this scene of weary struggle the better, so far as we are ourselves concerned. Till then, welcome battle, conflict, victory!

As a picture of his general way of life, the following ex-

tract from a letter from one of his Winchester friends is interesting :

When I first knew Mr. Robertson, he was certainly, both in appearance and manner, the most refined and gentleman-like young man I had ever seen. His smile and address were winning. He was quite free from any of the *gaucherie* and effeminacy which now and then characterize men of letters. Enthusiastic, and aspiring after impossible perfection, he was grave generally, and a vein of melancholy ran through his character. He could scarcely derive pleasure enough at this time from small and common things. Small pleasures were scarcely pleasures to him. Not much society was offered to him, and he did not wish for it. He was rather too much disposed to regard general society as a waste of time.

His powers of conversation were most remarkable, and so were his acquirements. He was no contemptible scholar, and of general information he had a large store. His knowledge of French and Italian literature were far beyond the common. His power of quotation, especially of poetry, was remarkable. During the first months of his clerical life he was a close student in the mornings, getting up early, and eating almost no breakfast in order to be able to apply himself to his work. He chiefly at that time devoted himself to the study of Hebrew and biblical criticism, though he read all kinds of books. His retentive memory made him a sort of *synopsis criticorum* in his own person. He seemed to know what had been written by most of the great authorities on all difficult texts. His views were entirely "evangelical," but even then puzzles suggested themselves. He was always trying to discover wherein lay the difference between "a saving faith" and a merely historical belief in Christ as the Saviour.

His way of life was most regular and simple. Study all the morning ; in the afternoon, hard fagging at visitation of the poor, in the closest and dirtiest streets of Winchester ; his evenings were spent sometimes alone, but very often with his rector.

Such was his outward life ; but the history, so far as it can be gathered from his papers, of his spiritual life remains to be told. He had entered, as we have seen, upon his ministry partly in sadness and partly under the influence of an ascetic enthusiasm. But he soon met with temptations and hindrances to a severe Christian life which arose from his peculiar temperament. At Winchester he endeavored to overcome these temptations by austerities. He restricted himself to all but necessary expenses, and spent the rest of his income on the poor. He created a system of restraint in food and sleep. For nearly a year he almost altogether refrained from meat. He compelled himself to rise early. Thus he passed through the domain of the Law, before he entered on the freer region of the Gospel. His motto always was, "If any man will follow me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily." But at Winchester self-denial was partially expressed in self-imposed and outward observances ; at Brighton, it was the spontaneous and natural expression of his whole inward life.

He refrained also from much society. In some papers

which he wrote long afterwards, he speaks of this with approbation.

I am conscious (he says) of having developed my mind and character more truly, and with more fidelity, at Winchester than anywhere. Looking back, I think I perceive reasons for this. First I went out little, and hence perfected what I undertook before fresh impulses started up to destroy the novelty and interest of the impulse already set in motion. For example, I read Edwards completely and mastered him. The impulse came to its limit, unexhausted.

It will be seen, by contrasting this with his letters, how clearly he saw the mistake he had made by desultoriness at college, and with what determination he corrected a fault.

He found, he said, devotional reading of great use to him. He read slowly "The Imitation of Christ;" but, when he could, he chose, as his books of devotion, the lives of "eminently holy persons, whose tone was not merely uprightness of character and high-mindedness, but communion with God besides." It made his sense of the reality of religious feeling more acute when he found it embodied in the actions of the men who expressed it. He read daily the lives of Martyn and Brainerd. These books supplied a want in his mind, and gave him impulse. "I recollect," he writes at Brighton, "how much more peaceful my mind used to be when I was in the regular habit of reading daily, with scrupulous adherence to a plan, books of a devotional description."\*

Prayer was his constant resource. In his hours of gloom he would often retire and pray alone till he realized God's presence.

It seems to me now (he writes in 1841) that I can always see, in uncertainty, the leading of God's hand, after prayer, when every thing seems to be made clear and plain before the eyes. In two or three instances I have had evidence of this which I can not for a moment doubt. You can have little idea of the temptations in the ministry to despond and let the hands hang down, and the many hours of doubt and difficulty which come upon the soul. And if to these were added the uncertainty, whether the position itself were one in which we had placed ourselves without God's direction, they would be indeed intolerable.

He invariably felt the necessity of forms to support spiritual life, and that all the more, perhaps, from his natural aversion to them. Prayer, always customary with him, had become the habit of his life at Oxford.† He systematized prayer

\* See Letter LXXII. for the whole subject.

† The following prayer was written at Oxford and used at Winchester. It proves the sternness of his opposition to the school of Mr. Newman:

"The enemy has come in like a flood. We look for Thy promise. Do Thou lift up a standard against him. O Lord, here in Oxford we believe that he is poisoning the streams which are to water Thy Church at their source. Pardon us if we err. Oh, lead us into all truth. But, O our God, if we are not mistaken, if the light which is in us is darkness—how great is that darkness! Lighten our darkness in this university with the pure and glorious light of the Gospel of Christ. Help, Lord, for the faithful are diminished from among the children of men. My Father, I am like a child,

at Winchester. He set apart certain subjects for each day in the week. "Sunday: Parish; outpouring of the Spirit. Monday: Act of devotion. Tuesday: Spread of the Gospel. Wednesday: Kingdom of Christ. Thursday: Self-denial. Friday: Special confession. Saturday: Intercession."

The prayer in which all these centred, the one prayer of his whole life, was that he might have an "objective, disinterested love of Christ," and that he might have "that possession of God which arises from love for others."

Bring into captivity (he prays) every thought to the obedience of Christ. Take what I can not give; my heart, body, thoughts, time, abilities, money, health, strength, nights, days, youth, age, and spend them in Thy service, O my crucified Master, Redeemer, God. Oh, let not these be mere words! Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee. My heart is athirst for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

The preaching which resulted from this prayerful spirit was imbued by it. Speaking of sermon-writing, he says:

The most valuable book I possess is a remembrance of trials at which I repined, but which I now find were sent in answer to my prayer to be made a minister. *Oratio, meditatio, tentatio*. And those sermons in which these have had much share, I have found, tell most; and I trust that God will bring in his flock by such a thing as I. I am sure if He does, it will be strength made perfect in weakness indeed.

Those who are acquainted with his later career will feel astonished at the contrast it presents to this period. The austerities, the seclusion from society, even the reading of that class of devotional books which rather tend to weaken than to strengthen character, were all put aside at Brighton. The sermons preached in that town speak continually of the unprofitableness of asceticism, of the necessity of living, as Christ did, among men in the world, and of the dangerous tendency of mere devotional reading. It is plain that if he had lived more naturally at Winchester, he would not only have retained his health, but also given a manlier vigor to his intellect. But trained in a very restricted school of thought and religion which was dominant thirty years ago, he could not emerge from it without first going down into its depths. It seems to have weakened every thing that he

blown about by every wind of doctrine. How long shall I walk in a vain shadow, and disquiet myself in vain? Let not my inconsistent, selfish conduct be a pretext for blasphemy against Thy saints and persisting in heresy. Hear me, my Lord and Master."

But as his ministerial experience grew, he began to think less of "heresy," Tractarian or otherwise, and to see that it was redemption from sin, and not so much from untrue opinions, which the world required. He writes from Winchester: "I have too much of stern iniquity and hell rampant to grapple with, to give much time to reading or Church questions; indeed, even the Tractarian heresy has vanished from my mind amid the sterner conflict with worldly passions and open atheism; for we have some of these madmen here."

wrote. His letters of this time are scarcely worth reading. His thoughts are not marked by any individuality. The only thing which did not suffer was his work. The desire to die, partly suggested by ill-health, seemed to him to be a spiritual desire. The sensitiveness of his conscience unduly exaggerated every failure into a sin. He fell into a habit of unwise self-dissection. It is painful to read his diary in which all his inward life is mapped out into divisions, his sins and errors labelled, selfishness discovered in all his efforts and resolves, and lists made out of the graces and gifts which he needed especially. It is impossible not to feel, when he got rid of all this, and felt its fruitlessness and its antagonism to the true spirit of the Life of Christ, how he sprang from a dwarf into a giant.

And yet all this self-torture and self-inquiry gave him, to a certain degree, an insight into the hearts of men, though, generally speaking, only into the evil of their hearts. He gained a great command over the feelings of those who felt themselves oppressed with the same weight of sin and struggle. His sermons touched such men to the quick. They were delivered with great ease and self-command. His beautiful voice, his dignified yet vivid action, and the impassioned earnestness of his manner, made every word tell. In themselves, the sermons preached at Winchester do not exhibit much power. Contrasted with those delivered at Brighton, they are startlingly inferior. They do not, to the *reader*, even foretell his future excellence. They are overloaded with analyses of doctrine. They are weakened by the conventionalities of University theology. They are, however, full of forcible appeals to the consciences of men, and of deeply-felt descriptions of the love of God in Christ.

They contain all the characteristic doctrines against which he afterwards so deliberately protested at Brighton. They contain also many passages which are in reality records of his own spiritual struggles; for in preaching he could not argue abstractedly. He saw things by the light of his own heart, and he preached unconsciously his own pain and his own effort.

I think (writes one of his friends, who *heard* him preach every Sunday at Winchester) that his sermons *did* prophesy of his future excellence. I am disposed to say that they were never at any time more impressive. He then wrote them throughout with great rapidity, always on Saturday, the time between breakfast and one o'clock sufficing for a sermon. He did not use much action, but there was a restrained passion in him which forced people to listen. Though there was much thought in all that he said, yet in those days he had, so to speak, scarcely begun to think, and of course had come to no conclusions. He had not then thrown off his leading-strings.

This friend of his continues :

About one year of simple life and hard work, during which I think he was really happy, passed. A personal trial then befell him, which he felt very bitterly, and which affected his health and spirits. He thought himself attacked by the malady which had carried off so many of his family, and therefore would have no medical advice, and use no remedies. He imagined that if he once told his feelings he would be laid aside at once, and he was determined to preach as long as he could stand. This he literally did, and never were his words more telling. He did preach as one who thought himself dying, to dying men. He did not then care to live long, and had a sentimental pleasure in the thought of an early death. He afterwards said so, adding that he did not then know how much God had for him to learn before he should be fit to die.

The following letters mark the gradual rise of these feelings :

March, 1841.

My work does not prosper as you anticipate—at least it appears at a standstill, and my own energy and heart for the work seem gone for the present. It will not, I trust, be always so; but after a time I shall be braced up to renewed exertions. \* \* \* There is much to be learned which can not be obtained alone—to say nothing of the responsibility of having so many souls intrusted to the charge of a young beginner. Oh, it is a heavy, heavy weight! I begin to think and tremble as I never did before, and I *can not* live to Christ. My heart is detached indeed from earth, but it is not given to Him. All I do is a cross, and not a pleasure—a continual struggle against the current; and all I effect is to prevent being hurried back as rapidly as I might be—but I make no way. I know I shall soon have some heavy blow to start me from my lethargy. Even so come, Lord Jesus!

May the Holy Spirit warm you to greater self-denial, and holiness, and love, and devotedness than I can feel or imagine.

Winchester, April, 1841.

I trust, my dear J., you will be taught unceasing diligence. If you could but feel those words, “the night cometh when no man can work,” as you will feel them when it comes, there would be an end of trifling in you, and me, and all of us, forever. Things now of apparent importance shrink up into nothing in sight of that hour. And there is a work to be done for Christ: how little time to do it in! Surely there is nothing here worth living for but to be conformed to Him in deed, and word, and thought, and to die really to the world.

Winchester, May 31, 1841.

My ever kind and considerate rector is pressing me much to go home for relaxation, which in all probability I shall do soon. Indeed, I believe I must; for, almost immediately after seeing you at Oxford, I became very unwell, and whatever it may be, it seems to increase instead of diminishing in unfavorable appearance. Periods every now and then of extreme lassitude come on, together with cough and pain in the side. Of course this may be nothing at all; but I write to you in confidence of friendship, that I begin to suspect my life will not be a long one. Not that I think there is any immediate danger, but a very few years would seem to be the utmost limit. I fear I am too earnestly longing to depart; perhaps this has partly contributed to make me form this opinion of myself, and there is a great difference between a desire to be with Christ, and a mere wish to be released from the weariness of the flesh. Which of these two is my feeling only God knows. Do not mention what I told you, as it is merely my own surmise. \* \* \* My dear sister is very ill, though my family seem lately to have become sanguine as to

her ultimate recovery. Oh, if we could only learn that hard lesson, "Thy will be done!" To say this in every dispensation, be it what it may, is the whole of religion; for what have we to do but to have our wills entirely merged in that of our Father? and when this is done, we are ripe for the garner.

The medical advice which he at first refused, he was induced at last to seek.

Winchester, June 17, 1841.

I have been for the last week under medical care in town, for cough and pain in the side, and other unpleasant symptoms, arising from inflammation of the mucous membrane of the lungs and bronchial tubes. I am thankful to say that further mischief is arrested for the present; but the medical men insist on my giving up duty for some time. I concealed this from my family as long as it was uncertain, as I told you in confidence; of course it is a secret no longer, especially as it is not so bad as I expected.

Again, on July 5, 1841, he writes:

I have been strongly advised to try a change of scene and air in Switzerland, and I think it will probably end in my following this counsel, though I feel much indisposed towards it. But I must make some effort to escape from this lethargy of body and apathy of mind, and perhaps this will be the only means I can devise. With this exception, I do not think there is now very much the matter with me, only I can not fix my mind, or interest myself in one single thing on earth. I know it is a morbid state which must be overcome by vigorous effort, but the difficulty is to make it.

Before his departure for the Continent, he passed the examination for priest's orders. He writes from Farnham to Mr. Nicholson:

Mrs. — has very kindly offered me letters of introduction to Geneva, which will considerably contribute to fix my plans of travel, as I shall proceed there at once, with only a delay of a few days at remarkable spots on the Rhine, and then make small excursions from Geneva as my head-quarters. I find a strange contrast in the views of this July and those of last—when all seemed a bright field of conquest before the eyes, and there had been no experience of the painful truth that the professional opposition to others' sin does not release a minister from the struggle with his own. This time I have had little but shame to feel, bitter shame, and God alone can judge how inadequate to the cause. All this I do not hesitate to say to you, though to others it would be egotistical and indelicate; but I have just been giving vent on paper to the thoughts which rose uppermost, without much considering either order or connection. To-morrow I am to be irrevocably in outward ritual set apart to the work of God. I would that it were as easy to be separated forever from the earthliness within.\*

With this mournful retrospect and sense of failure closed his ministerial life at Winchester. His young experience had passed out of enthusiasm into despondency. Looking back, three months afterwards, from the death-bed of his sister, upon

\* It was the custom of the Bishop of Winchester to ask the candidates for priest's orders to write an account of their diaconate. The account given by Mr. Robertson seemed to the Bishop so valuable for its suggestions, teaching, and experience, that he retained it, and frequently gave it to future candidates to read, as a noble expression of the spirit and mode in which a diaconate should be fulfilled.



that time, he says: "She is fast wearing away, and her short career will soon be at an end. Three months ago, how I should have envied her calm decay, and longed to share her quiet shroud, and her departure to be with Christ."

But this sadness was soon remedied by change of scene and the excitement of healthy exercise.

He travelled on foot through the Continent. He entered at once, and fully, into continental life, and manners, and politics. He endeavored to see all sides of foreign questions, by conversing with men of all classes.

Nor did he shrink from speaking of religion as it ever presented itself to him as a life in Christ. Few would have dared to have spoken to men as he did on spiritual subjects; few could have so succeeded if they had dared. Even Englishmen do not seem to have been offended. Such was his earnestness and his delicate courtesy, that no one ever drew back in injured dignity. Men were rather induced to open their hearts to him. He had a way of half-revealing himself—of giving freely all he could give of himself, while the sacred depths of feeling were undisclosed, which insensibly lured men to unfold themselves in turn. The whole was done unconsciously. He neither knowingly gave nor withheld. He was carried away to say what he did say by the impression which the person he conversed with made upon him. His instinct told him where to stop. Hence arose the wonderful reality of his words, the strange, entire absence of self-consciousness which gave such a personality to all he said, and such an impalpable force to every action and impression. Old men consulted him; strangers disclosed to him the difficulties of their spiritual and worldly life.

On the other hand, when he met men who despised Christianity, or who, like the Roman Catholics, held to doctrines which he believed untrue, this very enthusiasm and unconscious excitement swept him sometimes beyond himself. He could not moderate his indignation down to the cool level of ordinary life. Hence he was wanting at this time in the wise tolerance which formed so conspicuous a feature of his maturer manhood. He held to his own views with pertinacity. He believed them to be true, and he almost refused to allow the possibility of the views of others having truth in them also. He was more or less one-sided at this period. With the Roman Catholic religion it was war to the death—not in his later mode of warfare, by showing the truth which lay beneath the error, but by denouncing the error. He seems invariably, with the pugnacity of a young man, to have attacked the Roman Catholic faith; and the mode in which

this was done was startlingly different from that which afterwards he adopted.

With the Neologianism of Germany—to make use of his own term—he also came into contact.

I travelled several days with a young Prussian of Elberfeld. He gave a dreadful picture of Krummacher both as to his life and doctrine, evidently colored by extreme hatred to religion. Indeed, the account was its own refutation. It was one of the many proofs that we daily meet with, that they who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. He was well informed in English and German history, much inclined to ridicule Scripture and holy things. At last it came to a discussion. He mentioned, as usual, some difficulties in Scripture, and, after a long argument, I told him our hopes, our belief, and our conviction. Direct assertion did partially what discussion had failed to do. He ceased bantering, and, after a few minutes' silence, said, gravely, "*C'est une belle croyance*—I would that I could believe it too." Poor fellow! he was afterwards reinforced by two Swiss of Geneva—one an avowed infidel, the other a blasphemous Socinian. He was unbounded in his mockery of Malan, Merle, etc., whom he called madmen. "Momiers" is the general popular appellation applied to them. "They are a new-fashioned set," he said, "who are tired of old people. They have deserted the old——" (he meant God the Father), "and will have nothing to do with any one but His Son." He walked off on being reminded that the "new-fashioned set" was not these men, but those who had deserted the doctrines of Calvin. So I was left to the fearful libertinism of the infidel, backed, I fear, by the approval, but now silent approval, of my Prussian acquaintance. We parted, I fear, without any good done. I hope to get from Merle or Malan some account of the Church here to-day, or at least soon.

From the Rhine he passed into Switzerland, through the Jura. He had introductions at Geneva, where he continued to stay for some time. He plunged at once and eagerly into the various church and religious questions which then agitated the city. The vigor, the life, the bright enthusiasm which he brought to bear on all subjects, delighted and astonished the circle in which he moved. Friends sprang up around his path. It seemed as if he had become a Genevese, so close was his interest and his sympathy with the despised Christians of Geneva, and the impetuosity and determination of his mode of argument are both characteristic of him at this period.

The following letters and extracts of letters, written from Winchester and the Continent, are inserted as containing in themselves a history of his thought, and feelings, and opinions. One especially, dated August 3, Hôtel de la Couronne, is remarkable for a positive statement of his doctrinal views during the second year of his ministry, and also for the prophecy of Malan, so sternly fulfilled afterwards: "*Mon très-cher frère, vous aurez une triste vie, et un triste ministère.*"

*Letters from September 17, 1840, to August 3, 1841.*

## VIII.

September 17, 1840.

The ministry is not to be entered lightly, nor without much and constant prayer for direction; but if a man's heart be set to glorify his Lord with the best service his feeble mind and body can offer, there can be nothing comparable to the ministry. I have already known some ministerial trials, and I foresee more—much hardness and much disappointment; but I may tell you from experience that you would take nothing that earth has to offer in exchange for the joy of serving Christ as an accredited ambassador. Your kind hopes expressed for my sister are, I fear, in vain. From the moment that I saw that fatal hectic, which I know too well, I felt assured her hours on earth were numbered. May God give us grace to say from the heart, "The Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." I am going to see her as soon as I can.

## IX.

Rodney House, October, 1840.

MY DEAREST DUESBERY,—My date will show you that I am now at home for a little relaxation, which is very acceptable after continued work. \* \* \* I am sorry, and yet half glad, to find by your letters that you are still unrecalled to Bermuda. I am glad, because it shows your heart is still at home with us, uncooled by absence, and because it shows that you are unsatisfied with any thing that is to be found below. I think there is something implanted in man's heart, fallen creature as he is, which defies him to be content with any thing but God alone. It is a trace of original majesty, which leaves a mark of what he was before the fall. He is always panting for something fresh, and that is no sooner attained than it palls upon his taste. And this strong necessity of loving something makes a man form idols for himself, which he invests with fancied perfections; and when all these fade away in his grasp, and he finds their unsubstantiality, he must either become a misanthrope or a Christian. When a man has learned to know the infinite love of God in Christ to him, then he discovers something which will not elude his hold, and an affection which will not grow cold; for the comparison of God's long-suffering and repeated pardon, with his own heartless ingratitude, convinces him that it is an unchangeable love. And I hope in God that your disquieted feelings will terminate in this discovery of the fullness of peace purchased by the cross of Christ. All goes on satisfactorily at Winchester, the attention and attendance, I think, gradually deepening and increasing; and I hope many are becoming more and more in earnest about their souls. My treatment I only complain of on the score of exuberant kindness. I live almost at Mr. Nicholson's, and we go on hand and heart together. I had to officiate lately at the funeral of a poor man, for a clergyman who was unable to attend. The burial-ground is on the top of a hill which overlooks Winchester, about half a mile off. I was engaged with my own duty until very late, and night was just closing in as we set off from the church. An old man came and walked by my side; we went along, and engaged in a very interesting conversation. There was something very romantic as the procession slowly wound round the hill—the deep shadows gradually closing in; and it rose to the sublime when we stood at the side of the grave on the top of the exposed hill. It was nearly dark; and the dark, silent figures closing in around me, with their white hat-bands streaming in the wind, which moaned drearily, gave a solemn and unearthly aspect to the scene, especially when the coffin was lowered down into the grave, only distinguishable by its dark contrast with the snow around. Oxford term has begun. Only fancy! It

seems the dream of another life ; every thing has been so entirely changed in a few months. Gowns, and lectures, and proctors, and all the conventional language and feelings of that august place, will ere long fade from the imagination. No wonder, for the work of reading has been succeeded by a sterner struggle with sin in its loathsome dens of iniquity. However, with a few exceptions, I have been well received in the worst places. It is a heavy thing, the weight of souls—hard, up-hill work. Now and then little things come out by accident which give hope. I heard that a poor woman said, every word of one sermon went to her heart, and she thought I was preaching at her. It is necessary to hear these things sometimes, or it would be more than faith could bear. Yet faith would bear it. I again make the resolution to write again soon.

## X.

Winchester, November 24, 1840.

MY DEAR HATCHARD,—I hasten to answer your letter, which I received on Sunday morning. Most sincerely I congratulate you on your prospect of a curacy, but much more on the approach of the highest earthly honor—the privilege of working for Christ ; and welcome you to a participation of its joys and sorrows. Perhaps the latter predominate here ; but they are not worthy to be compared to the joys which shall be revealed in us, if we suffer with Him. I think the strictness of self-examination for ministerial fitness is contained in that solemn, searching question of our Lord, thrice repeated, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these ?” And if we can, from our inmost souls, say, as Peter did, “Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee,” I believe the injunction which follows, and the warning of martyrdom, would be received with equal joy as our Master’s will. I am sensible that it is a test that makes me humble ; still, notwithstanding backwardness in the work, and much yielding to sloth and self-gratification instead of sowing in faith without longing to see the fruits, I do feel that if the labor, the hard toil in the vineyard, were taken from me, I have nothing left on earth to live for. And I trust that you may have this spirit, less dulled and clouded by earthly motives and low views than it is in me. \* \* \* J. has not succeeded in his attempt at the fellowship, and I do not know that I am sorry for it, as I believe that it would ruin him altogether to live an Oxford fellow’s selfish, dronish life.

## XI.

March 4, 1841.

MY DEAR DAVIES,—\* \* \* I received the sermons which you so kindly sent me with much pleasure ; that especially on justification seems, under God, calculated to do good. I believe there is at this time a determined attack made by Satan and his instruments to subvert that cardinal doctrine of our best hopes—justification by faith alone ; and how far he has already succeeded let many a college in Oxford testify. It is the doctrine which, more than any other, we find our own hearts continually turning aside from and surrendering. Any thing but Christ—the Virgin, the Church, the sacraments, a new set of our own resolutions ; any or all of these will the heart embrace as a means to holiness or acceptance rather than God’s way. You may even persuade men to give up their sins, if they may do it without Christ ; as teetotalism can witness. And the Apostle’s resolution, in spite of all we say, is one which we are again and again making, and yet forever breaking, to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. \* \* \*

## XII.

May 22, 1841.

My sister seems to grow weaker day by day ; and though they seem inclined to flatter themselves that she is better, her extreme languor and con-

tinued cough tell a different tale. Alas! there is no home here, and no abiding comfort; and yet I do not know why I should say alas! for it is better to have one tie to earth severed after another, till we have nothing left to live for but Christ. What emphatic energy must have been in the feeling of St. Paul when he wrote those words: *τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων εἰς τὸ ἀναλῦσαι, καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι*, when even we, in the midst of self-indulgence, can yearn for it! I do not wonder at the feelings you express in reading H. Martyn's letters; what a glorious instance he was of what God can make such a thing as man—little less than a seraph burning in one deathless flame of love from the moment when, as he expresses it, the last thing left on earth was taken from him, till the last burning words were traced at Tocat. It is a book that may well be blistered by hot tears of shame. Sometimes one is inclined to fancy that if a path of special usefulness could be pointed out, we might devote ourselves as he did; but I suppose this is only the usual feeling of readiness to bear any cross but that which God has put upon us. I am now reading a book of much devotional and self-denying fervor, Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*. I love to feel the oneness of feeling which pervades the sons of God amidst vitally opposed communions. To see such men as Martyn and à Kempis at the right hand of Jesus in His kingdom, will be a joy that might almost compensate for a menial post there as the lowest of the low. \* \* \*

## XIII.

Hôtel de la Couronne, Geneva, August 3, 1841.

MY DEAR STRU,—I have already sent three letters. You come fourth in the family; therefore this is directed to you. I begin from where I left off. This morning I went to call on M. Malan, without introduction, except that of many mutual acquaintances. I sat talking with him about two hours. The chief subject of discussion was that of assurance. He says that a Christian can not be without assurance, except sinfully. This I agreed to, though not exactly on the same ground as that on which he puts it. The proof of adoption is a changed heart—2 Cor. v. 17. If a man see this change in himself, it is a proof to him that he has believed, because the work of regeneration is begun—the work which God performs in the heart of all whom He has chosen, conforming them to the image of his Son—Rom. viii. 29. If he does not see this change, it is evidently because of the pre-eminence of sin; and therefore the want of assurance springs from sin. But Malan makes it sin, not indirectly, but directly. His argument, simply stated, is this: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. You acknowledge that. Is He the Christ? Have you any doubt? You are sure He is? or do you mean to say you do not believe that He is? But if you tell me you do believe that He is, how can you doubt your safety? Would you make God a liar? for He says that "every one who believes is born of God." I do not think this satisfactory, because I believe many who never will be saved are convinced of it, and so in a certain sense believe it, as the devils do who tremble, or as Simon did—Acts viii. 13—who was yet in the bond of iniquity. And it is this possibility which can make a Christian doubt his own state, even when he says, I believe. Still I admit that want of assurance is the mark of very low attainments in grace: because, if sanctification were so bright as to be visible, there would be no doubt. Though a subject on which I have thought much, he gave me many new ideas. I have only mentioned one for the present.

Yesterday I dined with M—. They were very attentive, and the conversation on all manner of subjects extremely interesting, till we came to discuss the advantages of creeds for a Church. He was for admitting all shades of opinion. I represented the object of our Church, to admit all whose opinions differed on subjects not fundamental, and exclude others. But it soon

turned out that our views of fundamental questions differed entirely, and I told him we could not consider one who denied the Deity of Christ a Christian. I used this term, because I knew he would admit the "divinity." He then told me he did not hold the Deity. I said I could not retract, and must tremble for him. This led to a hot and long discussion. Poor — misquoted Scripture, and would make no answer to the texts I brought forward. My chief point was to prove the death of Christ not merely a demonstration of God's willingness to pardon, on repentance and obedience, but an actual substitution of suffering; and that salvation is a thing *finished* for those who believe—not a commencement of a state in which salvation may be gained; insisting especially on Heb. x. 14. But to this he would scarcely even listen, and protested against single texts, requiring the general tone of Scripture as the only argument. It would be long to go through it all. He understood fully that the denial of his right to the name of Christian was not necessarily intolerant, but might be even charity.

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I have just returned from another long discussion with Malan, before several persons, which I do not like, because calmness in argument is then always difficult. You think of your own victory instead of the truth. However, I only parried, and allowed him to cross-question me. He does it in the most affectionate and earnest manner; but I could not yield, because I believe all I said based upon God's truth. He said, "Mon très-cher frère, vous aurez une triste vie et un triste ministère." It may be so; but present peace is of little consequence. If we sin we must be miserable; but if we be God's own, that misery will not last long; the evidence is lost only for a time, but I do feel sure it is lost. But God's promise is so clear—"Sin shall not have dominion over you"—that the evidence must become bright again by victory. Misery for sin is better worth having than peace. I love old Malan from my very soul, and hate disputing with him, even though it is the dispute of Christian brothers. How we ought to yearn for the day when truth shall not only be, but also be felt to be *one*. \* \* \*

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### CHAPTER III.

Marriage of Mr. Robertson.—Death of his Sister.—He takes the Curacy of Christ Church, Cheltenham.—Character and Influence of his Preaching.—His Despondency and its Causes.—His Influence in Society.—His Conversation.—His daring Character.—His Reading.—Extracts and Letter throwing Light on his Spiritual Development.—Influences which contributed to the Change in his Opinions.—Progress of this Change.—Its Crisis.—He leaves Cheltenham for the Continent.  
Letters during his Journey.

MR. ROBERTSON did not travel farther than Geneva. He met there, and, after a short acquaintance, married, Helen, third daughter of Sir George William Denys, Bart., of Easton Eston, Northamptonshire. Almost immediately after his marriage he returned to Cheltenham. He was cheered by a farewell visit to Winchester—

Where (he says) many of my old congregation received me with great affection, and I preached to a very crowded church my last sermon. From what I learnt I have reason to believe that more than I had thought were savingly

brought to Christ during my ministry there. If this be so, it is more than a requital for a whole life of labor.

For some months, owing to his ill-health, he was forbidden to do any regular duty. During this interval of passiveness, his mind wrought and forged out some results from his past experience. Even at this period his freedom from party spirit, and his individuality of character, began to be recognized. He says, writing in January, 1842 :

How much some systematic preparation for the ministry is needed in our Church! We enter it almost without chart or compass; and I suppose the Anglican Church alone exhibits the strange spectacle so common amongst us of a deacon intrusted with the *sole* charge of souls. I hope not to be alone for some years to come, if God should spare me so long. I have preached here several times, and been set down sometimes as a Tractarian, sometimes as an ultra-Calvinist. I trust the accusations neutralize each other, for they are most certainly incompatible. If a man will really endeavor to avoid Popery, either that of Rome or that of a party, and practically hold the real Protestant doctrine of the supremacy of Scripture, I suppose he must be content to come into collision with conventional phrasology, and several received views. Yet it is somewhat hard to unflinchingly incur the suspicion of those whom, on the whole, you believe to be God's people, although it is so easy to keep out of sight what is unpalatable. I am much tempted to it sometimes in the pulpit and in conversation.

In February of the same year, his sole surviving sister, Emma, died. She had long been lingering into death. He watched her with a brother's affection, and the whole image of her patience crept into "his study of imagination;" and impressed him with a more solemn sense of duty and eternity. He writes in February :

Dear, dear girl! you can not dream the holiness which filled her young mind, increasing daily and rapidly till she departed to be perfect. There had been a subdued calmness about her for years, which made the earnestness with which she sometimes expressed her opinion on vital truths more striking and more lovely. She had left us all behind, far; and when I think of her, I am disgusted with the frivolity and worldliness of my own heart. Is it credible that a man can have known Christ for six years, and believed that there is in store an inheritance whose very essence is holiness, and yet be still tampering with the seductions, and follies, and passions of this wretched place? I trust this solemn scene may make us all who have witnessed it more in earnest, and more single in heart and purpose. The days are fleeting away, and there is little done for Christ, much for self and sloth. And I sometimes shudder when I wake, as it were, for a moment, to remember that while we are dallying, the wheels of the chariot of the Judge do not tarry too, but are hurrying on with what will be to some among us fearful rapidity. My dear Hatchard, what need we have to pray for an ever-serious, solemn mind, and an unresting sense of the presence of God within and around us! The startling silence in the room where the last of my darling sisters lies, has chilled my heart with a cold feeling of certainty that most of our life and profession is mockery. To serve the Eternal *so!*

Before his sister's death occurred, he had been inquiring for a curacy. He wrote to Mr. Hatchard in January, 1842:

I am grieved to hear your account of yourself. Take care. Depend upon it, you will gain nothing by a press of steam, as I now acknowledge with bitterness; indeed, I do not expect ever to be worth much again. Can you tell me of a curacy which combines diametrically opposed qualities—sufficiency of stipend and easiness of work? By easiness I mean half services, that is, I can not take any duty single-handed, but must have either a resident rector, or a stipend sufficient to procure regular assistance. I have had a district church mentioned to me. Such a thing would just suit me.

The curacy of this district church, the incumbent of which was the Rev. Archibald Boyd, now incumbent of St. James, Paddington, was offered to him and accepted. He entered on his duties in the summer of 1842, and performed them for nearly five years. The only external events which marked these years of his life were the birth of three children and the death of one.

It was fortunate for him at this time that he had formed a high estimate of his rector. It was all-important for him, in a place like Cheltenham, that a great reverence for another should keep him humble, and that eager emulation after an ideal should prevent him from being carried away by the passing excitements of society.

Writing to Mr. Hatchard in the beginning of his second year at Cheltenham, 1843, he says:

28 Park Place, Cheltenham, February 9, 1843.

MY DEAR HATCHARD,—Many thanks for your kind congratulations and long letter. I feel considerably antiquated by being invested with the honor of paternity, and already experience a sort of foretaste of its cares and responsibilities. I am thankful to say both my dear charges are going on far better than I could have hoped, and I only trust that I may be enabled to realize the promise inseparably annexed to "training," for otherwise I should feel indeed a heavy sinking at the prospect of my boy's future career.

I am sorry to read your account of your rector's ill-health. What you quote from Bishop Hall is very true in *some* cases. God grant that when we are called our work *may be done*. Poor Grotius's motto lies sometimes heavy at my heart—"Vitam perdidit operosè nihil agendo." You tell me nothing of your work. Mine is far less satisfactory than at Winchester, partly from the superficial nature of this place, in which I would not remain another day but for the sake of my coadjutor and leader; partly from the effect of the temptations and the frittering away of time almost inseparable from a residence here.

Mr. Robertson always preached in the afternoon. He soon began to exercise upon his congregation his peculiar power of fascination. It was the fascination not only of natural gifts of voice, and speech, and manner, but also of intellect warmed into a vivid life by the deepest earnestness. Mr. Dobson, formerly the principal of Cheltenham College, says of him, in a letter to his father:



I well remember the first sermon I ever heard him preach at Cheltenham. It required little sagacity to discover, even from a single specimen, that he was no ordinary man. Even at this moment I can see him, then in almost youthful beauty, raising his hand above his head as he closed his sermon with the words, "The banner of the cross, without taking up which," he said, "no man could be a Christian." This generation will not look upon his like again.

Another friend, who has given much information as to his Cheltenham life, writes :

I had taken a prejudice against him, through no fault of his, when it was my good fortune to hear him preach. At this time he had just become curate to Mr. Boyd. I was not merely struck, but startled by the sermon. The high order of thought, the large and clear conception, the breadth of view, the passion held in leash, the tremulously earnest tone, the utter forgetfulness of self in his subject, and the abundance of the heart out of which the mouth spake, made me feel that here, indeed, was one whom it would be well to miss no opportunity of hearing.

From the first he largely swayed those minds which had any point of contact with his own. In spite of what he says himself of Cheltenham, in its depreciation, he had very many hearers there who knew how to rate him at his proper value, before a larger public had indorsed it. Nor was it among the lay men and women of Cheltenham alone that he made his influence felt. I have been told that at the clerical meetings he attended, he would, for the most part, remain silent, but that sometimes, when many of his brethren were in difficulty about the meaning of a text, he would startle them by saying a few simple words which shed a flood of new light upon the passage. He never put himself forward on these occasions, but his talents were none the less recognized and held in honor by the foremost of his brother clergymen. For all this admiration, as admiration, he did not care. He could not be contented with any thing short of the visible influence of his preaching on the life of men. This is plainly shown in the following letter, which I inclose you.

"MY DEAR —, — I do not conceal from you that it gave me pleasure to hear that what I said on Sunday had been *felt*, not that it had been *admired*. God knows that is not the thing that would give me joy. If I wanted that, I should write and act very differently from what I do. But it comes, like a gleam of fitful sunshine now and then across a very bewildered path, to find that there are chords from which one can strike harmony, albeit with a rude and unskillful hand. Such things startle and thrill me now and then, as I suppose the strange melody would have done, coming so unexpectedly when the first sunbeams fell on Memnon's statue—for, to say the truth, it comes often very heavily upon my heart what is meant by that—

As it is, I live and die unheard,  
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

Or :

ἔχθιστη ὀδύνη πολλά φρονέοντα μηδένας κρατεῖν.

"Yours ever, etc. etc."

This letter suggests one of the reasons of his great despondency during his stay at Cheltenham—he believed his sermons to be unintelligible. There were some causes for this belief, but they were not peculiar causes. There are always some in every congregation who will depreciate a curate, and contrast him, however superior, with an incumbent ;

and there are always others who can understand nothing which is original, whom an argument couched in novel terms bewilders. But common as these things are, they touched this uncommon nature in a special manner. Through the mist which his own sensitiveness created he saw the misconception of a few magnified into a phantom of failure.

One Sunday (writes the same friend), he had been using all his eloquence to show that this world without religion is a riddle, and that the Christian religion is the only key to it. The next day he received an anonymous letter from one of those lady hearers whom he was wont playfully to call his "muslin episcopate," in which he was told that Christianity made all the difficulties he spoke of plain. "So much," he said to me, in a tone of bitterness, "for the good effects that follow from my preaching." To the end of his life it was the same. He always would look upon the misfortune of want of intellect in others as a fault of his own. That he was not so unintelligible as his fancy deemed, even when he had simple, untaught intellects to deal with, is plain from this circumstance, that when he had taken charge of a rural parish in one of his Cheltenham vacations, the church, almost empty when first he came, was rapidly filled by illiterate country-people who showed the same breathless interest in his sermons as the most cultivated hearers to whom he preached at Brighton. On another occasion I well remember, when spending part of a summer holiday with him, how the newly-built church, which stood apart from the village in a park, became more and more frequented every Sunday by goodly farmers and rustic laborers, who listened to him, all eyes and ears, with a pleasant mixture of delight and astonishment. To whatsoever class he spoke, the language of his sympathies made him intelligible.

Owing to his clerical profession, he thought himself, at this period at least, debarred from all participation in any of the manlier sports which, by bracing his physical frame, would have counteracted his over-excitabile mental temperament. He allowed himself none of the healthful exercises which he so passionately loved, except an occasional walk and ride into the country. The absence of these exercises tended to deepen his despondency; but the chief cause of his want of heart was his belief that his work at Cheltenham was a failure.

This melancholy fancy (continues his friend) took more and more possession of him during the latter part of his curacy, but even at the very outset it darkened round him. It was partly created by his extraordinary admiration of his rector. It was a great disadvantage to him that he had to take the afternoon sermon, when an hour before he had been listening to one that his partial judgment perhaps overrated. So difficult was it for him to believe that any thing he said was worthy of the place where his incumbent had preached, that during the whole of his Cheltenham career he never seemed at ease in the pulpit, he never did justice to himself, he never spoke with satisfaction to himself. He overshadowed himself by his creation of an ideal which he did not hope even to approach. Another cause of the melancholy fancy I have spoken of was his scrupulosity of conscience. It led him to regard as duties left undone those which others might deem only too well performed. Often, in coming home at night, he would walk with me for hours,

and talk of the little good that he was doing. And when I have tried to comfort him by saying that he was sowing seed which would germinate in the future, and bring forth fruit a hundred-fold, he has pointed to the pavement on which we were walking together, and asked "if I thought he might reap a harvest there?"

"Sad and dispirited"—such is an entry in his diary, 1845—"from feeling my own utter uselessness and want of aim. Surely man's misery is want of work. I mourn not that I can not be happy, but that I know not what to do, nor how to do it." He threw the shadow of these thoughts round Cheltenham itself, and professed in his letters from Brighton that, but for a few friends there, he would never visit it again. In all this he wronged himself, as well as many of his friends. He speaks in later letters from Brighton of the pleasure he felt in finding so many true hearts in Cheltenham. But wherever his sensitive fancy as to his own work in life comes into play, he must not be judged out of his own mouth. He arraigns himself, in a letter to a friend, "for poor unvisited, and duties left undone."

And yet (says this friend) I recollect his calling on me just before his going abroad, as late as ten o'clock at night, and taking me with him a distance of three miles, through such a storm as Lear was out in, to visit a poor, disconsolate old man, who seemed to have shut himself out from human sympathies, and therefore all the more enlisted his. I never knew one whose care and constant kindness to the poor could compare with his.

In a private diary kept in 1845, there are long lists of poor and sick whom he visited, and accounts of sums paid out of a small income to clear off the debts of struggling workmen; and no man who could write the following letter to one of his early friends could in reality be backward in labor for Christ:

Cheltenham, November 28, 1843.

MY DEAR DAVIES,—Your affectionate letter has lain long unanswered. But I was away on a tour on the Continent of some duration when it arrived, and since I have been much engaged in preparing candidates for confirmation. What a solemn charge the ministry is! I feel it more day by day, and my own unfitness for it. Surely a man would almost give it up if he dared. We do things, most of us at least, so badly, so half-heartedly, and self creeps in amidst it all so much, that it all seems one great mass of impurity, which would weigh us down with a sense of intolerable guilt, if it were not that we have something to interpose between our demerits and punishment. It is a privilege to know this. There is nothing but this which can give serenity. At the same time, it is a great privilege, too, to know that the Gospel is a system of resources by which we are to become purer and better day by day. It is a grand thing to be a Christian. It is a magnificent hope that we are ever to become partakers of the Divine Nature.

Not only in public but in private was his influence felt. He was cordially welcomed everywhere; but it was in the circle of his own immediate friends that his fascination was

most apparent. It had all the character of genius. He was utterly unconscious of it. He never spoke for display; and yet "I have seen him," said a friend, "take a flower, and rivet the attention of his listener with a glittering stream of eloquent and glowing words, which he poured forth without premeditation and almost as a soliloquy." The spirit he possessed sanctified the influence he gained from these gifts of nature. He clothes them with the graces of a Christian. His daily and hourly life—his little acts as well as his greater—his words in society, were all regulated, balanced, and checked by his ceaseless remembrance of the life of Christ as the highest life, and by his continual sense of the presence of God. All was done "ever as in his great Taskmaster's eye." His graceful courtesies did not merely spring from natural kindness of heart, but were matter with him of Christian duty. In the drawing-room he would separate himself from those he liked best to converse with, and spend a great part of the evening by the side of the most neglected, sacrificing himself to brighten a dull existence. Perhaps his influence on society was more powerful, as more insensible, than his influence in the pulpit.

Society, in its turn, had a power over him. He easily received impressions. Some of his highest and best thoughts were kindled by sparks which fell from the minds of his friends. His intercourse, even with those inferior to himself, was always fruitful. He took their ideas, which they did not recognize as such, and, as first discoverer, used them as his own; but they were always made more practical and better for the use. Even of thoughts which he received from those to whom they belonged, by right of conscious possession, he made himself the master. One from whom he borrowed says of him: "It was not that he appropriated what belonged to others, but that he made it his own by the same tenure as property is first held—by the worth he gave it." To such a man society was necessary. He needed its impulse, its clash of opinions, and, in some degree, its excitement; and he always spoke best, wrote best, and acted best, when he was kindled either into combativeness or admiration by the events which stir the heart of humanity.

He was a marvellously bright and eloquent talker. His sermons give no idea of the uninterrupted river of his speech. It had all the variety of a great stream—quick, rushing, and passionate when his wrath was awakened against evil; running in a sparkling glitter for many a mile of conversation, over art, and poetry, and science, and the topics of the day, with power at will to stay its course, and collect itself into a

quiet seriousness of waters—again shooting impetuously, yet without a false curve of its glancing water when it got into the gorge and among the rocks of an argument; and flowing with a breadth and depth, a fullness and strength of stream, with a thousand eddies of illustrations and thoughts bubbling out of the opulence of its depths, when it expanded and went stately forward over a great subject. He conversed, or rather spoke, best in the open air. He liked to walk or ride when he talked, that he might put Nature under contribution to illustrate his ideas. Physical exercise gave nerve to his thinking, and health to his views of things. He took deep pleasure in the scenery which surrounded Cheltenham. The aspect of Nature's life, the freshness of summer air, took possession of him, played in his blood, and quickened into excitement all the daring and courage which at times transformed him from the clergyman of the nineteenth century into the bright young knight of the Middle Ages. One day, riding with his wife and some friends, he put his horse at a lofty hedge. It was a dangerous leap. The horse refused it again and again. His friends, who saw all the hazard, for the ground was hard on the other side, dissuaded him earnestly from another effort. But he could not bear to be conquered; and he did not believe in danger. The horse urged, at last cleared the hedge, but came down with such a crash on the other side, and with his rider under him, that the lookers-on thought both must have sustained serious injury. Robertson got up smiling, but afterwards owned he had been too rash. His courage was always greater than his love of life. It is no wonder, with such a spirit, matched with so chivalrous a heart, that he often thought that he had mistaken his profession, and said to his friends, "that he would rather lead a forlorn hope than mount the pulpit stairs." He believed in his own courage, and honored it without a shade of vain delight in it. Once when walking with a friend at Cheltenham, his little boy became frightened from some slight reason. On his friend remarking it, and saying that perhaps the child lacked courage, he turned sharply round and said, "Courage—want courage! he should never be a son of mine!"

On one occasion (writes a gentleman who knew him well at Cheltenham), he had been asked to preach at a church where the congregation was chiefly composed of those whom Pope describes as passing from "a youth of frolics" to "an old age of cards." I accompanied him, and listened curiously for his text. It was this: "Love not the world, nor the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The sermon was most impressive and eloquent, and bold in its denunciation. Returning home, he asked me if I thought he was right in preaching it. I an-

swered, "that it was very truthful; but, considering the character of the clergyman whose pulpit he occupied by courtesy, and the character of the congregation, not a discreet sermon. It might have been as truthful without apparently setting both minister and people at defiance." "You are quite right, quite right," he answered; "but the truth was this: I took two sermons with me into the pulpit, uncertain which to preach; but, just as I had fixed upon the other, something seemed to say to me, 'Robertson, you are a craven, you dare not speak here what you believe;'" and I immediately pulled out the sermon that you heard, and preached it as you heard it."

This anecdote, as well as that of the leap, displays more rashness than true courage. He learnt afterwards that far loftier courage which has no necessity to prove its own existence to itself.

During this life at Cheltenham, his intellectual power became rapidly greater, in proportion as his individuality of character increased. As he freed himself from conventional forms of thought, he secured a mental grasp and vigor which he had not at Winchester. He began now to hew out his own path to his convictions. His continuous reading of Carlyle marks the state of intellectual ferment in which he now lived. "I have gained good and energy from that book," he says, speaking of "Past and Present." He read a great many historical books; and it is curious to find that, in preparing for his class on the books of Samuel, he had not recourse to commentaries, but to Niebuhr's Rome and Guizot's work on civilization, and to books on political economy. Tennyson and Dante seem to have been the poets whom he chiefly read, though his reading of this class of literature must have been large, since the lectures on poetry which he delivered at Brighton were first delivered, though not so fully, at Cheltenham. Dante he seems to have read every day, and to have committed the whole of the "Inferno" to memory during 1845. German metaphysics took up some of his time, and usefully. He had the rare power of extracting out of them what was practical, and of rejecting, while his subtle intellect played with pleasurablely, their fine-woven gossamer of ideas. He still kept up his early interest in scientific pursuits, especially chemistry; and he relieved his leisure with the study of physical geography. He had a useful habit of reading on the questions of the day. When the Maynooth grant was being contested, he made notes of all the debates, and read, in order to form a clear opinion, Burke on the Irish Laws, Lingard, and Hallam. This was his constant practice; and, owing to it, he was always ready with a well-considered view of all the subjects which had agitated the country during his career.

With regard to his inner life while at Cheltenham, the si-

lent agony and labor of his spirit in much gloom and anxiety, there is little to record. The following extracts not having any thing peculiarly private about them, and throwing light upon his spiritual life, are given. One is dated 1843, the other 1845 :

1843.

*Meditation for Prayer.*—To plead the glory of God manifested to others in the preservation of his people, and the perpetuating, at the same time, of his fear in their own breasts, as an argument to be used before his throne, that he would conduct me into peace. Joshua iv. 24, viii. 9 ; Exodus xxxii. 12 ; Daniel xix. 19 ; Joel ii. 17.

To ask for love which I have not, as a free gift, that which I can not force upon myself, see 1 John iv. 8. Communion with God is not to be attained by abstraction and asceticism, but by the development of Christian sympathies. 1 John iv. 12.

*Self-denial in Eating.*—Motives: my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Excess will incapacitate me from glorifying Him ; it will produce listlessness, discontent with self, and therefore with others. Hence the Christian graces can not shine in me. It will give earthly and grovelling views, and cause me to forget my state of pilgrimage. It will be a precedent for fresh indulgence, generally, as well as particularly, in the same temptation. It will prevent reading and meditation, weaken my sense of God's presence, and my own acceptance, by losing the evidence of integrity. It will close my lips in speaking to others of Christ's self-denial. If observed, it will give a handle for reproach, and a right to enemies to accuse me of inconsistency, and give to them a handle to strengthen them in persisting against an unworldly life. It is a paltry trial for a child of glory to fail in. It is a base return for the washing of the blood of Christ. It is a temptation expressly mentioned as unfitting for the ἀποκαταδοκία of the second coming of Christ. προσέχετε δε εἰντοῖς, μήποτε βαρνηθῶσιν ὑμῶν αἱ καρδίαι ἐν κραιπάλῃ καὶ μέθῃ καὶ μερίμναις βιωτικαῖς, καὶ αἰφνίδιος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἐπιστῇ ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη. —Luke xxi. 34.

In sleeping, early rising is to commence the day with an act of self-denial, which, as it were, gives the mind a tone for the whole day. It redeems time for early prayer, thereby dedicating the first warm aspirations to God, before the dull, and deadening, and earthward influences of the world have had time to impair the freshness of early feeling. It gives calmness to the day. Late rising is the prelude to a day in which every thing seems to go wrong.

1845.

*Resolves.*—To try to learn to be thoroughly poor in spirit, meek, and to be ready to be silent when others speak.

To learn from every one.

To try to feel my own insignificance.

To believe in myself, and the powers with which I am intrusted.

To try to make conversation more useful, and therefore to store my mind with facts, yet to be on my guard against a wish to shine.

To try to despise the principle of the day, "every man his own trumpeter ;" and to feel it a degradation to speak of my own doings, as a poor braggart.

To endeavor to get over the adulterous-generation-habit of seeking a sign. I want a loud voice from heaven to tell me a thing is wrong, whereas a little experience of its results is enough to prove that God is against it. It does not cohere with the everlasting laws of the universe.

To speak less of self, and think less.

To aim at more concentration of thought.

To try to overcome castle-building.

To be systematic in visiting, and to make myself master of some system of questions for ascertaining the state of the poor.

To listen to conscience, instead of, as Pilate did, to intellect.

To try to fix attention on Christ, rather than on the doctrines of Christ.

To preserve inviolable secrecy on all secrets committed to me, especially on any confidential communication of spiritual perplexities.

To take deep interest in the difficulties of others so communicated.

To perform rigorously the examen of conscience.

To try to fix my thoughts in prayer, without distraction.

To contend, one by one, against evil thoughts.

To watch over a growing habit of uncharitable judgment.

The following letter, though immature in thought and weak in expression, bears witness to the delicacy and strength of his sympathy, and mirrors his Christian thought :

1845.

MY DEAR MRS. —,—The sight of your handwriting was a most warm pleasure to me. It brought back old days—days which it would be very strange if I could forget. But I was much saddened by the contents of your note, because its tone, though subdued and calm, evidenced a long, dark struggle with anguish, which has almost been too keen to bear. And, oh! how little we know one another's bitterness—how little we suspect the hours of secret agony and cold struggle that every earnest, loving heart has to go through in this most unintelligible world! Sometimes it seems to me a marvel how we can ever smile again, so often does life seem to shrivel into a failure and a nothingness. I think I can conceive your trial, and partly imagine that worst feature of all suffering, its incommunicable, lonely sensation. To be where we and those around us are living in two different worlds of feeling, is tenfold more intolerable than to be where a foreign language, not one word of which we understand, is spoken all day long. Those have always seemed to me words from the very brink of the infinite of feeling: "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not," etc. I would with all my heart that I could feel for you as I could wish to feel, or even that I could distinctly express such feeling as I have. To a certain extent I should have a right to do this, for I know something of what you have lost. A most warm, affectionate, and unselfish friend was taken from me when God bereaved you. But I do feel that sympathy from man, in sorrow such as yours, is almost mockery. None can feel it, and certainly none can soothe it except the Man Christ Jesus, whose infinite bosom echoes back every throb of yours. To my own heart, that marvellous fact of God enduing Himself with a human soul of sympathy is the most precious, and the one I least could afford to part with of all the invigorating doctrines which everlasting truth contains. That Christ feels *now* what we feel—our risen, ascended Lord—and that He can impart to us, in our fearful wrestlings, all the blessedness of his sympathy, is a truth which, to my soul, stands almost without a second. I do pray that, in all its fullness, this may be yours—a truth to rest and live upon.

Next to that stands the deep meaning of the cross, that we are perfected through suffering. What worthy crown can any son of man wear upon this earth, except a crown of thorns? Sore struggle, darkness, loneliness—but with all that, the true battle of an earnest soul in its terrible struggle into light and clearness, up to God—that is your portion now. And, oh! may God stand by you, and teach you that a Christian's motto everywhere and always is Victory. I look forward anxiously to seeing you. My wife sends her very kind wishes.

On the whole, these years were years of advance, but every



step of the path was over a conquered enemy. It was during this period that the basis of his theological science was entirely changed; his principles of thought attained, but not as yet harmonized with one another; his system of interpreting the Bible proved and verified; his whole view of the relation of God to man and man to God slowly built up into a new temple on the ruins of the old. When he began his ministry at Cheltenham, many common and many peculiar religious experiences; many elements of belief conquered out of doubt; many elements of doubt itself, enthusiasms, speculations, memories of strange feelings, and secret feelings which led him into either too poetical or too despairing a view of life, were, as it were, floating in solution. When his ministry at Oxford began, his character and his principles were fixed for life.

The outward influences which most contributed to his development were the friendships he formed, and the circumstances of his ministry at Cheltenham. The warmth of his affections made him take the highest view of the duties of friendship. Even while he was proclaiming in his letters something like misanthropy and indifference to his friends, he was always ready to spend every thing in their service. His heart conquered easily, and in a moment, his philosophy. The chivalry of his nature made him believe all things of those he loved. "I recollect almost irritating him once," said a gentleman, "because I maintained with regard to a friend that his moral qualities outshone his intellectual." Hence his affection sometimes vitiated his judgment, and he idealized his friends into a perfection which often did not belong to them. One result of this was that when a friend failed him, and his idol fell from its pedestal, the shock almost broke his heart. Another, and the most important, was that the greatest changes in his life and modes of thought were wrought in a large degree through the influence of his friends. Not that he was ever a passive instrument on which they played, but that the chords they struck made him conscious of the music in himself: their sympathy drew him out, and sometimes quickened his whole nature into an almost preternatural activity of thought and feeling, during which any swift reflection or quick return of his own or a cognate thought, even any deep interest on the part of another, kindled so intense a fire of creative force that his words seemed to pour forth red-hot with the rapidity and earnestness of an imagination which gathered fresh fuel from its own consumption.

Above all, he needed the sympathy, the reciprocity of thought, the consciousness of being understood, which a true

and deep friendship gives. And yet this was the man who afterwards, at Brighton, partly by circumstances, partly by his own nature, was driven into the deepest solitariness of heart; whom God saw right to separate from almost all his brethren, and to surround with slander and misunderstanding, that he might learn to "stand alone, in the strength of manlier independence;" that, divided from human sympathy, like his Master, Christ, he might be able to enter into and to teach as none else have done so well in that generation, the character of the human life of the Saviour. It is a truth always new from its strangeness, that the prophet must be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—despised and rejected of men, that the consoler must be one who feels all that is human keenly, but who is unfelt for himself by men.

He had boyish friendships, which he characterized as "full of sudden impulses; of impetuous, passionate attachment; of protestations, vows of constancy, prodigality of promises." The friendship of the years of manhood he defines "as not mere intimacy, but as exclusive, personal regard, mingled with reciprocity of feeling; as founded on the communion of like with like, or of unlike with unlike;" and a passage in one of his unpublished sermons at once gives the depth with which he felt, and the opinion which he held with regard to the origin of a friendship:

Hearts are linked to hearts by God. The friend on whose fidelity you count, whose success in life flushes your cheek with honest satisfaction, whose triumphant career you have traced and read with a heart throbbing almost as if it were a thing alive, for whose honor you would answer as for your own; that friend given to you by circumstances over which you had no control, was God's own gift.

One of these friends was Mr. Boyd. The admiration which he expresses for his rector in his earlier letters from Cheltenham rapidly passed into an affection which was rendered delicate by a veneration almost childlike. Indeed, there was nothing more beautiful in his nature than the innocent faith which always sought for and believed in the nobility of others. He saw his friends through the atmosphere of his own love and truthfulness, and when, as sometimes happened, he was, against his will, convinced that what he saw was partially, at least, an air-built castle, the beauty of which was his own creation, the blow fell heavily and sorely on his heart. The influence of this friendship was, however, clearly marked. It bore fruit in his sermons. Under the impulse given by those of Mr. Boyd, they became entirely changed in character. Instead of writing them in one morning, without preparation, as he did at Winchester, he studied

for them on Thursday and Friday, and wrote them carefully on Saturday. They were no longer so much disquisitions on doctrine or mere impassioned descriptions of the love of God in Christ. Their tone was more intellectual, without being less earnest; their generalizations more daring, and their practical teaching wider. Especially he learnt to enter into the more minute and subtler phases of Christian life. Through the ideal which friendship created, much of his peculiar *intellectual* power in preaching was drawn to the light.

The other friendship which influenced him largely was formed with a gentleman well read in metaphysics, and acquainted with the results of the sudden outburst in this century of theological and philosophical excitement in Germany. He had faced as subjects of intellectual inquiry those questions which Robertson had faced as subjects of personal spiritual experience. Both desired, with a most single purpose, truth, as the end of their speculations. Their conversations were frequent and interesting, and it was partially, at least, due to this friendship that Mr. Robertson escaped from the trammels which had confined his intellect and his spirit.

The circumstances which, independent of friendship, most tended to change his theological views, and his principles of spiritual thought, were connected with the state of religious feeling in Cheltenham. The controversy of the "Tracts for the Times" was at its height when he entered on his curacy. The town was a hot-bed of religious excitement. There were the usual tests of orthodoxy applied to every new clergyman, and the usual ban placed on those who could not repeat their Shibboleth. Popular preachers were adopted as leaders of party; and to hold certain doctrines, and to speak certain phrases, and to feel certain feelings, was counted equivalent to a Christian life by many among their congregations. This is common enough, and Mr. Robertson came into contact with it at Brighton as well as at Cheltenham. But coming from Winchester, where there was little or none of this popular religion, and where his work lay among the poor, who do not make so great a parade of their spiritual life, he was shocked by the contrast. At first, with his unquestioning charity, he believed that all who spoke of Christ were Christlike. But he was rudely undeceived. His truthful character, his earnestness, at first unconsciously, and afterwards consciously, recoiled from all the unreality around him. He was so pained by the expression of religious emotion which fell from those who were living a merely fashionable life, that he states himself, in one of his letters, that he gave

up reading all books of a devotional character, lest he should be lured into the same habit of feeling without acting. His conception, also, of Christianity as the religion of just and loving tolerance, and of Christ as the king of men through the power of meekness, made him draw back with horror from the violent and blind denunciation which the "religious" agitators and the "religious" papers of the extreme portion of the Evangelical party indulged in under the cloak of Christianity. "They tell lies," he said, "in the name of God; others tell them in the name of the devil: that is the only difference."

It was this, and other things of the same kind, which first shook his faith in Evangelicalism. He was an upright, faithful follower of that school at college and Winchester, and, strange to say, a rigid Sabbatarian. The following letters mark the point of view he occupied when he had been a year at Cheltenham:

I quite agree with you about the Calvinistic doctrines. I think we ought to preach them in the proportion in which they are found in Scripture, connected always with election unto holiness. The fact is, we have one thing, and only one, to do here on earth—to win the character of heaven before we die. This is practical, and simple to understand. We can not do it alone; but the Spirit's agency is given us, under our present dispensation, to mould us by his influences into the image of God. And with this great truth, what madness it is to spend our time in speculating about our election! I preach it, I trust, uncompromisingly and unmistakably; but, as a topic of preaching, I desire to make it very subordinate to the end towards which it converges, the restoration of sinners to the heavenly purity which they have lost.

Cheltenham, January 10, 1843.

It seems to me that at the Reformation, and subsequently, the error of stickling about non-essentials was shared equally by both sides. If the High-Church party were unpardonable for making them a matter of life and death, the Puritans were surely not blameless in dividing the Church upon such matters. It may be very true that, like the school-boy who lived "once upon a time," they refused to say A, because they knew they would next be compelled to say B, but still it would have been better to have waited for this, and made the stand on a vital point instead of a ridiculous one. \* \* \* I think the *principle* is an important one at this crisis, however the application may be dubious in detail. We need to walk warily and circumspectly, "giving no occasion." Offense there will be soon, because our principles can not amalgamate by any device—not even a second edition of No. 90—with the Tractarians it is *bellum internecinum*. But I would reserve the contest till principle is at stake; and until it comes to genuflections at the altar, I think there is scarcely any external matter that might not be complied with. I wish we were together. You ask after my plans. I have none, but am just waiting till my path is pointed out. I fear there is no chance of my remaining here. My life has been so full of changes, that I scarcely look at any thing now as if it were permanent; perhaps I have too much of this feeling; for it prevents my forming plans till the opportunity is past.

1843.

\* \* \* Now for your questions. I think Dr. Pusey's doctrine on the Eucharist just as dangerous, but much more incredible, than transubstantia-

tion. I think the Vice-Chancellor might have given him an opportunity of recanting, but I am very glad he did not, for it would have only prolonged a useless controversy. As to the Church of England, I am hers, *ex animo*. I do not mean to say that if I had written her baptismal service, I should have exactly expressed myself as she has done; but take her as she is, "With all thy faults, I love thee still." As to the state of the Evangelical clergy, I think it lamentable. I see sentiment instead of principle, and a miserable, mawkish religion superseding a state which once was healthy. Their adherents I love less than themselves, for they are but the copies of their faults in a larger edition. Like yourself, I stand nearly alone, a theological Ishmael. The Tractarians despise me, and the Evangelicals somewhat loudly express their doubts of me.

These letters were written in 1843. In the following years doubts and questionings began to stir in his mind. He could not get rid of them. They were forced upon him by his reading and his intercourse with men. They grew and tortured him. His teaching in the pulpit altered, and it became painful to him to preach. He was reckoned of the Evangelical school, and he began to feel that his position was becoming a false one. He felt the excellence, earnestness, and gladly recognized the work of the nobler portion of that party; but he felt also that he must separate from it. In his strong reaction from its extreme tendencies, he understood, with a shock which upturned his whole inward life for a time, that the system on which he had founded his whole faith and work could never be received by him again. Within its pale, for him, there was henceforward neither life, peace, nor reality. It was not, however, till almost the end of his ministry at Cheltenham that this became clearly manifest to him. It had been slowly growing into a conviction. An outward blow—the sudden ruin of a friendship which he had wrought, as he imagined, forever, into his being—a blow from which he never afterwards wholly recovered—accelerated the inward crisis, and the result was a period of spiritual agony so awful that it not only shook his health to its centre, but smote his spirit down into so profound a darkness, that of all his early faiths but one remained: "It must be right to do right." He had passed up the hill Difficulty with youthful ardor; he had been glad in the Beautiful house, and seen the Delectable Mountains from far; he had gone down the hill with enthusiasm and pleasant thoughts; but Apollyon met him in the valley, and broken by the battle, but unsubdued, he walked in tenfold gloom through the valley of the Shadow of Death, with the fiends whispering dark doubts in his ears, till he half believed them to be his own—stumbling and fainting, but ever going onward—till at last emerging victorious he went up upon the hills to see with clearer vision than before through the glass of faith the shining of

the Celestial City. This is no mere fanciful parallel. Abstracting some passages evidently put in to suit the especial subject on which he spoke, and those to whom he spoke, the following extract from his lecture to working-men, delivered at Brighton, is a description of his own experience at this period, when, leaving Cheltenham, he wandered alone through the Tyrol :

It is an awful moment when the soul begins to find that the props on which it has blindly rested so long are, many of them, rotten, and begins to suspect them all ; when it begins to feel the nothingness of many of the traditional opinions which have been received with implicit confidence, and in that horrible insecurity begins also to doubt whether there be any thing to believe at all. It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning, and seems shrivelled into a span ; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit, when those who should have been his friends and counsellors only frown upon his misgivings, and profanely bid him stifle doubts which, for aught he knows, may arise from the fountain of truth itself ; to extinguish, as a glare from hell, that which, for aught he knows, may be light from heaven, and every thing seemed wrapped in hideous uncertainty, I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scathless ; it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality. In the darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, yet even then it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward. Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who, in the tempestuous darkness of the soul, has dared to hold fast to these venerable landmarks. Thrice blessed is he who—when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him, and his friends shrink from him—has obstinately clung to moral good. Thrice blessed, because *his* night shall pass into clear, bright day.

I appeal to the recollection of any man who has passed through that hour of agony, and stood upon the rock at last, the surges stilled below him, and the last cloud drifted from the sky above, with a faith, and hope, and trust no longer traditional, but of his own—a trust which neither earth nor hell shall shake thenceforth forever.

A friend to whom he confided his mental difficulties has given the following account. After stating that Mr. Robertson belonged to the Evangelical party, he proceeds :

He was led to reconsider his views. But the reopening of any vital question was, in his case, attended with infinite pain. His liberality was so great that he allowed every question to remain open for a time ; his earnestness was so great that he brought his best judgment to bear upon it, and very soon arrived at a conclusion. Then he considered the question closed. He would not suffer its ghost to haunt him. When he was forced, therefore, to reconsider a subject of great religious importance, he was deeply distressed. The examination of particular points of belief involved him in the examination of a great deal more. When the rains descended, and the floods came, and the wind beat upon his house, he must needs go down and look at its foundation. He suffered severely during the latter part of his stay at Cheltenham. He did not willingly say much to me ; but there was something

which he could not hide from a friend, which allowed him no rest for the sole of his foot. His health so suffered that I urged the necessity of giving up his curacy, and advised him to go abroad. I accompanied him as far as Liège, where we parted, and he pursued his way to the Tyrol.

At Ostend and Brussels he fell in with old friends, who seemed to cheer him, but the real state of his mind at this period may best be gathered from two letters written to me from the Tyrol and from Heidelberg. I have thought it right to send you these letters, because while I would jealously guard his memory, it does not seem to me wise to let the public have half-views of him, or think that any thing is kept back which may help them to form a true estimate of the man. Their publication will do him no harm, and may do the truth-seeking part of the world much good. Any false impression they may create will be corrected by himself in the letters of his later life.

During his stay at Heidelberg he plunged deeply into German metaphysics and theology. So the holiday which should have been given to health was given to the solution of those hard problems, by the consideration of which his health had been undermined. It is no wonder that, laboring thus night and day, he returned to Cheltenham less physically improved than his friends had hoped for, though calmer and more composed in mind. His soul had been stirred to its very depths, and had not yet had time to settle. The wine did not yet run clearly. He did not seek for sympathy. He was accustomed, as he said, to consume his own smoke. But he could not do this so entirely that his friends could not guess what was going on within. One of these, I recollect, who was with him at the English Lakes, said to him one day with some sharpness, pointing to the summit of Skiddaw, which was unseen the while for mist, "I would not have my head, like the peak of that mountain, involved, as we see it now, in cloud, for all that you could offer me." "I would," rejoined Robertson, quickly, "for, by-and-by, the cloud and mist will roll away, and the sun will come down upon it in all his glory."

He started for the Continent in September, 1846.

The interesting letters which follow reveal clearly his state of mind. They are very, even passionately, morbid in their view of life; but morbid thoughts necessarily accompany a struggle for spiritual existence. He was emerging from this gloom into clearer light when he arrived at Heidelberg. There he took the pulpit for the English chaplain, and so deeply interested many of the men who heard him, that his six weeks' stay in this place led to a large correspondence afterwards; especially on the part of some Unitarians, who, struck by his tolerance and his consistent support of the great doctrine of the Church of England, wished to hear more from him on the subject of their controversy.

#### XIV.

Cortina, September 24, 1846.

MY DEAR —,— I have a spare hour, and I can not better employ it than by giving you a sketch of my proceedings. I shall pass over all till the time when I got to Innsbruck, where I arrived about five o'clock one glorious afternoon. It lies in a valley about two miles broad, and extending in length as far as the eye can reach. In the centre of this runs, or rather gushes, the Inn, on its way down to the Danube. From the heights above, about four

hours before you reach Innsbruck, is a view which, in its way, I never saw equalled. A lovely plain studded with spires and villages, with none of the disadvantages of a plain, such, for instance, as is the plain of Gloucester, seen from Malvern, flat and wearisome. The background to this plain rises gigantic and abrupt, a long line of mountains, some of which, when I passed, were covered with recently fallen snow. Filled with all the disagreeable associations which belong to a twenty-six hours' drive in a dirty diligence, I can not describe the revulsion of feeling which is experienced when this splendor breaks upon you, lighted up by the brilliancy of a sunny day. It shone everywhere, except on my heart. That night I wandered alone by the rush of the Inn, and gave myself unreservedly to the spirit of the place. I love to do this always. I try to arrive at a place where I sleep in good time, that I may get my stroll, after I am quite refreshed, before the sun has set. Such an one I got last night at Brunecken, and such an one I got three years ago at the Grimsel, when I left my brothers in the hospice and strolled out alone. That evening almost stands alone in my life. I shall never have such another—so solemn, so awful, so almost holy. That wild, savage scenery, made more wild by storm-clouds which were just beginning to drift over the peaks above me, conveyed sensations which come only once in life. They say love comes only once. That is a sickly school-girl's fancy; but I do think nature, in all its mystery, is felt but once. Yesterday, and at Innsbruck, my feelings were not like those—not so sweet, not so happy. The sensation was one of *laissez aller*. Clouds were there, and rich purple and blackening mountains, and coming night; and my feeling was a kind of indifference which is not indifference. It was all drifting on—clouds, life, time, and I cared not how fast I drift along with it. Crumbling mountains, valleys strewn with rocks and ruin, and all this shrouding itself fast in deepening darkness. I came back to another world of feeling—lighted streets, people crowding out from vespers, noise, hurry, and uproar. Two things in Innsbruck pleased me much: the Hofkirche, in which is Hofer's monument, and two singular lines of gigantic bronze figures, besides the finest tomb in Europe—Maximilian's—and the museum. In the latter is a complete collection of every thing in the Tyrol—birds, vegetables, minerals, works of art, sculpture, and paintings by Tyrolese artists; and one compartment, as interesting as all the rest together, where lie Hofer's and Spechbacher's swords; some of the money coined when Hofer was governor of the Tyrol, his girdle, braces, sash, and a letter written for supplies. I drew his sword, and almost felt that it was done with a soldier's feeling.

Botzen, September 27.

I have been unable to finish this, from the impossibility of procuring legible ink in the mountain places where I have been the last few days. When at Innsbruck, I tried to get a shot at a chamois, and for this purpose engaged a jäger. We walked out one day to a distant place in the hills, where we slept. Next morning, at a little after four, the stars still shining brightly, and the sky like midnight, we set off, and saw the sun rise gloriously an hour and a half afterwards. We climbed on and on for hours, watching the clouds curling beneath us and wreathing themselves in fantastic forms, as if the morning light were torturing them—on and on, through pine forest, and heath, and rocks, till at three o'clock we had reached our highest altitude; but not even the trace of a chamois did we see. By nine at night I got back, ravenously hungry, and prepared to make up for the sleepless hours of the preceding night; but I was well repaid by glorious views—which few Englishmen can have seen—of the valleys of the Stubay, and Sill, and Inn, lying far beneath us. The night before was a strange and painful one. I could not sleep. My companion had taken leave of me with the usual respectful salutation—after supping on trout and sour wine together, side by side—turn-



ing down my bed to see if the sheets were clean, etc., and all those traits of respectful independence which mark the lower orders here. For some hours excitement kept me awake—excitement from the scenery I had just passed through, and the anticipations of the morrow to which I looked forward. That passed away, and still I could not sleep. Lassitude of heart came on—a strange, melancholy sinking of the spirit. Life rose before me like a thin shadow. I felt that past years had been one vast failure, and I looked on to future ones with a heart utterly adrift, wishing to be wiser than heretofore, practically wiser, but not knowing how. I was wide awake when the jäger came to summon me. Night after night has been like this—restless, whether I sleep or wake; and at five regularly I throw myself out in the dark to drive away the spectres. Take one single night as a specimen—the night before last. I dreamed that some one was telling me that all my friends were mourning over the deterioration of my sermons, etc.—their unintelligibility and emptiness. I woke, went to sleep again, and then was arraigned for duties left undone—sick unvisited, schools untaught, etc., with a minuteness of detail—names I never heard of, etc.—all of which it would be childish to record. I only tell you my dreams, to show you the unresting, unaltering state of my heart. Change of scene, hard exercise, conversation with foreigners—all make no difference. But enough of this.

I set out on Monday last from Innsbruck with my knapsack, and walked across the Brenner, up the valley of the Sill, down the valley of the Eisach, turned off at Mittenwald, passed along the valley of the Rienz, threaded the pass of Ampezzo, and in three days and a half arrived at Cortina, within twenty-four hours of Venice. The pass of Ampezzo is glorious. The road winds through serrated and striking mountains, in one place under a glacier. It was a beautiful day when I passed, and I had the full enjoyment of it—at least the first half. After that, rain fell in torrents, and by the time I got to Cortina I was drenched. But even this, I think, only enhanced the grandeur. Gleams from time to time revealed the more distant peaks, and the clouds curling curiously and wildly round the nearer ones only made the thing more sublime. \* \* \* Yesterday from a place called Castleruth, beautifully perched upon an eminence commanding views in every direction, and directly under one of the finest of the grand dolomite crags, I began to descend a most steep mountain down to Botzen. It was the hardest part of the whole walk—blistered me severely, wrung my ankle by a slip—but winds through scenery of enchanting beauty, till, at the foot, it leads by a single wooden arch thrown high across the Eisach into the road towards Botzen, twelve miles above it—the same road which I quitted when I turned off at Mittenwald to the Passier Thal. Southern scenery was now making its appearance. Luxuriant trellised vines, pumpkins lying rich and yellow on the ground, a more genial and almost sultry air, told that the land of sunny skies was not far off. Botzen, more south than which I do not go, lies at the junction of two valleys, the vale of the Eisach and that of the Adige, and is surrounded by hills which overhang the town; vines and fig-trees, mulberries, pumpkins, etc., clothe their sides. To-day I met an English physician at table, who has lived twenty-five years in Bohemia—looks German, speaks English with hesitation—and from him I have got a good deal of information respecting the Tyrol and German authors. He says Jean Paul is despised—has no claim to the title of a thinker; that the first Germans look down on all the metaphysical school; and that the metaphysicians, almost to a man, are defective in character.

## XV.

Hôtel du Prince Charles, Heidelberg, October 24, 1846.

MY DEAR —, —Thank you for your affectionate and kind letter which I received this morning, and which I hasten at once to answer. Yet I scarcely

know how to answer it. I would not willingly conceal any part of my heart from you, yet I fear I could not intelligibly tell you all, though I can put it in very distinct English for myself. At least, set your mind at rest on one point. Whatever mental trials I may experience, you are not responsible for any. I have heard you state difficulties, but never argue for them; and the difficulties could not come upon my mind for the first time—of a man who had read theological and philosophical controversy long before, with painful interest—a man who at different times has lived in the atmosphere of thought in which Jonathan Edwards, Plato, Lucretius, Thomas Brown, Carlyle, Emerson, and Fichte lived—who has steeped his soul and memory in Byron's strong feelings—who has walked with Newman years ago to the brink of an awful precipice, and chosen rather to look upon it calmly, and know the worst of the secrets of the darkness, than recoil with Newman, in fear and tenderness, back to the infallibility of Romanism. Such a man is not likely to have been influenced by a few casual statements of difficulties which he had read of a thousand times before. I knew well what the state of your mind *had* been. I thought I knew what it *is*, and therefore never, except in a walk once, in answer to a searching question, did I ever hint to you what was the attraction to my mind in such books. A man, as it has been well said, "ought to burn his own smoke, if he can not convert it into clear flame." For this reason, I shall not enter upon these points, except superficially. I am quite sure that what you say is true about getting truth—at least truth enough—at last, and I am quite willing to struggle on in twilight until the light comes. True, manly struggle can not fail. I know that. Only a man must struggle alone. His own view of truth, or rather his own way of viewing it, and that alone, will give him rest. He can only *adopt* the views of other minds for a time; and so long as his own is inert, the help that he gets directly from others generally does no good. Indirect, casual hints sometimes do much. I have never said so much as this to any one in England, and, of course, you will kindly not even hint it. Here, in Germany, I have conversed much and freely on the points of difficulty. I have found minds here that understand me if they can not help me, and in the conviction that a treasure lies near me in German literature, I am digging away night and day at the superincumbent earth, in order hereafter to get at it. Indeed, I have already plunged into it, perhaps too suddenly, considering my rudimental acquaintance with the language. Some things I am certain of, and these are my *Ursachen*, which can not be taken away from me. I have got so far as this. Moral goodness and moral beauty are realities, lying at the basis, and beneath all forms of the best religious expressions. They are no dream, and they are not mere utilitarian conveniences. That suspicion was an agony once. It is passing away. After finding littleness where I expected nobleness, and impurity where I thought there was spotlessness, again and again I despaired of the reality of goodness. But in all *that* struggle, I am thankful to say, the bewilderment never told upon my conduct. In the thickest darkness, I tried to keep my eye on nobleness and goodness, even when I suspected they were only will-o'-the-wisps. Indeed, I startled an Epicurean philosopher some time ago, here in Germany, with the vehemence with which I maintained this. He was defending Goethe's views and life, and I poured out my indignation in such a storm of fury that he quite covered before the blast, and between seven and eight next morning anxiously begged me to believe that he had overstated his own views. I had rather be a Stoic in hell fire than an Epicurean on his principles, or Goethe's, if they be Goethe's. I am anxious to set you at rest upon this point, for really you are responsible for nothing. Indeed, a man must have been profoundly and incredibly ignorant of literature, if these things had presented themselves to him in a few conversations in a new light. As to the ministry, I am in infinite perplexity. To give it up seems throwing away the only opportunity of

doing good in this short life that is now available to me. Yet to continue it, when my whole soul is struggling with meaning that I can not make intelligible—when I am perpetually bewildering people, and saying the thing I do not mean—to go on teaching and preaching when my own heart is dark, and lacks the light I endeavor to impart—when I feel as if it lay upon me, like a destiny, to speak truth, and not as Cassandra, to be disbelieved, but to be forever unintelligible to my brother man—is very wretched. \* \* \*

I intend to spend the remainder of my time in Heidelberg. Several English families are here; some of them well-informed and agreeable people. Heidelberg is a lovely spot. When I first saw it, I thought it the loveliest I had ever beheld. But it was summer then, and I was five years younger. Moreover, I have seen the grandest scenery, perhaps, on earth since then. Still, I admire it much, very much, and love to wander alone beside its winding river, especially at sunset, when the broad stream of yellow light streams along its whole length, almost from Mannheim to where I stand. The castle heights and labyrinths, and the walks on the hill above, are all full of beauty. And now, my dear —, farewell, and God bless you.

## XVI.

Hatchett's Hotel, Piccadilly, January 1, 1847.

MY DEAR —,—As to all you said about a creed, I never knew any sane man who doubted any part of what you urged upon me so warmly. That Christianity is true, that Christ's character is high, that to do good is better than to do wrong, I suppose, are axioms. But Paulus, even Strauss, would admit all this, and Socinians would demand a great deal more before they would call a man a Christian. Such points never seemed uncertain to me, except in moments of very bad dyspepsia, and then the dimness of the eye makes every thing look black. But you will remember that this creed leaves all that we are accustomed to consider the essentials of Christianity, as distinguished from natural religion, undetermined. For instance, suppose a man puts the question, *Who* was Christ? What are miracles? What do you mean by inspiration? Is the resurrection a fact or a myth? What saves a man—his own character, or that of another? Is the next life individual consciousness, or continuation of the consciousness of the universe? To these and twenty other questions which I could put, Krause would return one answer, Neander another, and Dr. Chalmers another; and I am certain that neither of the two last would be satisfied with even all that you urged as constituting Christianity—no, nor a great deal more in addition. Those are not points on which any man in health can suffer a doubt to last three-quarters of a second. And the questions I have mentioned, I mention not as perplexing myself (on that I say nothing), but as touching the real vitals of the question, which all you urge does *not* touch. But now to quit this subject. My mind is more under control than it was—my nerves braced by the surrender of Christ Church; and in proof of this, I mean to keep my weakness and wretchedness to myself, instead of plaguing my friends with them.

The following letters, though going over the same ground as the preceding, are kept separate from them and together, partly because they form a series, and partly because, being all written to one person—his wife, they are linked together by an unity of feeling.

Portions of them were submitted to the Editor's judgment, and they appeared so useful, as elucidating a remarkable time in Mr. Robertson's life, that Mrs. Robertson was request-

ed to permit their insertion. Considering them as sacred to the dead, Mrs. Robertson was at first disinclined to allow them to be published, but at last, unwilling to retain any thing which could make her husband better known to the world which honored him, she consented to the publication of the following extracts. In many ways they are extremely interesting. Those who will remember that they were written at a time when, as I have said, he was passing through the great mental and spiritual crisis of his life, will look through them, and not in vain, for hints as to the drift of his thoughts, and the direction in which his spirit was developing itself. They exhibit also his delight in natural scenery, and the delicate way in which he observed it. His reverence and love for Color appear in his descriptions. The rapidity with which he made his "course," the determination and contempt of pain which carried him, in spite of a strained sinew in his ankle, over twenty-six miles of mountain walking, belong to and illustrate his character. It is curious to see, with all his professed love of loneliness, how fresh his interest was in all classes of society; how he enchanted the German counsellor; how he drew round him, with his customary magic of manner, the rough herdsmen of the Tyrol; how he charmed, while he taught, the English congregation at Heidelberg.

The two last letters, in which he expresses his disinclination to resume the work of his profession, need a slight comment. It is plain that that disinclination arose not so much from dislike to ministerial work in itself as from his experience of ministerial work at *Cheltenham*; for we find him pleased and happy in his professional labors at Heidelberg. He had been misunderstood, rejected, and pained at Cheltenham; and his was not the stern nature which could receive and carelessly shake off a blow. With his natural incapability of selfish feeling, he believes that his so-called "failure" at Cheltenham was his own fault. He thinks that he is not fit for work among the upper classes. But when I see him, in these letters at Heidelberg—emancipated, his own master—drawing round him the very class he believed himself unfit to teach—attracting, by the atoning influence he always exercised, both Unitarians and Swedenborgians to the Church of England—bringing young men to his feet, and awaking at once the intellect and the spirit of those who listened to him—I begin to see that it was the fault of the congregation rather than his own if his ministry was a failure at Cheltenham; and I am deeply thankful that God did not permit His servant to enter the hidden country parish he

desired, but placed him where he should suffer more, and bear a sorer cross, but where also he was to be as a beacon set on a hill, whose light, warning, guiding, and inspiring can not be hid from men.

Patsch, near Innsbruck, September 18, 1846.

I begin this letter from a small hamlet up high in the mountains near Innsbruck, where I intend to pass the night previous to an attempt to shoot a chamois. I have got a Tyrolese jäger or chasseur with me who knows the country well, and at half-past four to-morrow morning we begin our work. But as the chamois are very rare now, and to get at them is exceedingly difficult, I can not say that I have much hopes of success.

We spent three days in Munich together in seeing the different collections which it contains of sculpture and painting. There are a few splendid statues and pictures, especially some of Rubens, whom I admire more and more. Certainly his faults are glaring and visible to all; but his genius is that of a giant; and when a man has to play with mountains as if they were balls, you do not expect elegance in his limbs. From Munich to Innsbruck I travelled with a young Frenchman and two Italians, the one a cardinal and the other apparently his secretary. These two spoke neither French nor German. We were much struck by seeing them for nearly an hour occupied in repeating the evening prayers from their breviaries. It seemed as if it would never be over. But the way in which they did it was exactly that of a school-boy humming over his lessons. They corrected one another when a mistake was made, smiled, took snuff, opened the windows, shut them down, had a few words of conversation now and then by way of interlude—reminding me very strongly how inevitable a tendency there is in all forms, even the best, to lose all the spirit which once animated them, and become like lifeless corpses. No doubt those prayers were once the expression of true and fervid feeling. Now, a very cardinal can scarcely go through them without yawning.

For a stage or two from Munich the country was perfectly flat; but at length it began to put on the features of mountain scenery, till at Partenkirch it became really grand. Our road wound through mountains, till we began to descend the mountain-chain which forms one side of the valley of the Inn. It is indeed a glorious prospect. The valley of the Inn is perfectly flat, about two miles broad, studded as far as the eye can reach in both directions with towns and villages, the spires of churches rising conspicuously at the interval of every five or six miles. This beautiful valley is bounded on both sides by Alpine chains, rising steeply and often perpendicularly from the very side of the road. One mighty rock in particular we passed, which is called Martin's Wand. It rises a sheer precipice of 1500 feet. It is celebrated for a wonderful escape of the Emperor Maximilian. He was out chamois-hunting, and in his eagerness fell and slipped down to the very verge of this descent. There, as the guide-book says, he hung with his head over, unable to move. He was seen from below, and the people issued from their cottages, headed by their bishop, who offered up prayers for him as for a man at the point of death. At last a desperate outlaw, who was hunting in that direction, perceived him, came down a descent which seemed impracticable, bound crampions to his feet, and led him off safely in a way which was considered miraculous. We came to this spot, or rather just above it, when the sun was already low, and steeping the mountain sides in that peculiar purple tint which in Alpine regions is so inexpressibly rich.

In all this glory there is a strange tumult in my bosom for which I can not assign any cause. Grandeur makes me misanthropic, and soft beauty makes my heart beat with a misery that I can not describe. In Retzsch's illustra-

tions of Goethe's "Faust" there is one plate where angels drop roses upon the demons who are contending for the soul of Faust. Every rose falls like molten metal, burning and blistering where it touches. It is so that loveliness does with me. It scorches when it ought to soothe. After my arrival at Innsbruck I wandered alone by the gush of that wild and roaring river. Every thing was still and solemn. Mighty shadows were moving silently across the valley, like so many giant spectres, as the sun went down behind the hills. The outlines of the mountains gradually blended in a sky which became by degrees as black as themselves, and I was left in the grandeur of darkness. I felt, as I generally do on such occasions, strongly the swift rush of time—on and on, bearing every thing along with it into the Infinite; and here are we, for a moment, powerless nothings, but endued with powers of agony and thought which none but immortals feel. Then I went slowly back to Innsbruck, heard the hum of life again, saw the windows glittering with light, heard the drone of the church bells, and met the crowds coming away from vespers. It all seemed a dream. Next day I devoted to seeing Innsbruck. My first attraction was the cathedral. In it is the statue of the celebrated Hofer. It represents Hofer in Tyrolese costume, with his rifle, decorations, and a standard in his hand, crowned with laurel by the Goddess of Victory. But the court of Austria, in their aristocratic littleness, considered this part of the design too flattering to a peasant, and the monument stands now without the crown and goddess; as if God had not stamped upon Hofer's brow and heart a nobility of which crowns and titles are but the earthly shadow. The nobles of Austria will have their memory with the worms that eat them, when Hofer's name is still high among the aristocracy of the universe.

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[The remainder of this letter describes the chamois-hunt, but it is here omitted—a description of the same expedition having already been inserted.]

Brunecken, September 23.

I proceed to take up the thread of my history where it last broke off, which was at Innsbruck, after my return from an unsuccessful chamois-hunt. I have now written three times; once from Frankfort, once by Mrs. Dalzell, and once from Innsbruck. I hope you got them all. On Monday last, the 21st, I set off on a pedestrian excursion alone.

I trudged on, very briskly at first, for the sun shone beautifully. Three hours from Innsbruck I came to Schönberg, from which there is a grand view of three valleys, terminating at this point. At night I slept at Stainach, a small village in the hills, at what in England would be called a pot-house. A motley assemblage was round me in the dining-room—peasants, travellers, servants, all dining at different tables. A figure of the Saviour, half as large as life, looked down on the noisy scene. \* \* \* The season in which we now are is very beautiful for walking. The fir woods in summer are sombre, from their having but one hue. Now there is a very beautiful contrast. There is the deep green of the older foliage, a delicate light green of this year's growth, and a rich orange of the trees intermixed with them which have now their autumn tint. This orange color is in some places, where it is well sprinkled in irregular patches, superlatively fine. And now I will tell you my general impression of the Tyrol. So far as I have seen as yet, I have been rather disappointed in the people. I have found less simplicity, less politeness, and far less cleanliness, than I expected. Religious they certainly are, if crosses and virgins almost at every quarter of a mile be a proof of religion. But I am inclined to believe that all this is looked upon by them in the light of a spell, and has much less influence on their moral conduct than is generally sup-

posed. Moreover, in every inn there is holy-water in your bedroom, and in the dining-room generally a figure of the Saviour; and at Mittenwald, under the figure, were some most touching sentences on life and death. But I never observed that this had any effect in solemnizing the parties who sit beneath it. They are satisfied with being under protection, and drink, play at cards, smoke, in a way that to us seems incompatible with religious feeling. And this, I believe, is the very essence of superstition—to feel great reverence for certain objects, visible or invisible, on account of some mysterious influence with which they are supposed to be endowed, but an influence which all the while has not necessarily any moral effect, or any connection with character. It is quite curious how these chapels beset you at every step, and their number is increased by the erection of one in every place where a fatal accident has taken place. These seem to have been exceedingly frequent; and the rude delineations of the circumstance, a man frozen to death, drowned, buried by an avalanche, etc., is in desolate districts very solemn and affecting. The sound of bells, too, in these Alps is a very peculiar feature.

Cortina, or Ampezzo, September 24.

To-day I had the finest walk of all, indeed the only one that has approached grandeur. The pass of Ampezzo, the shortest between Innsbruck and Venice, is remarkably wild and noble. The shape of the mountains, as well as their height, adds to this grandeur. They are peaked, serrated, and jagged in all directions. After the somewhat tiresome, because unaltering, scenery through which I had gone, this sudden view brought new sensations, and sent the blood thrilling to the heart, and then running about in all directions, not knowing where to go. After getting about half through, it came on to rain, a drenching shower, for two hours. But this scarcely diminished the beauty of the scene, for gleams of sunshine every now and then revealed unseen peaks through the rain, and the clouds drifting in masses round the peaks, now dipping down, and now leaving all bare, formed a picture exceedingly striking. Few things are more interesting than the way in which clouds group themselves in these regions. Sometimes they seem to hold fast to a mountain peak by a comparatively narrow base, while the rest of the vapory mass soars up and up, widening as it goes, to a height of which you only form a conception by comparing it with the lofty mountain, which does not reach one-fourth of the distance.

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Corfara, September 25.

This morning, at an early hour, I turned off from Cortina, which is on the road to Venice, and struck across the hills to this place. Very few English, so far as I can find, have ever come this way. The walk was in some places very grand. I passed castellated pinnacles, covered with snow which fell last night, ruined forests, fir-trees stripped of their bark and cast headlong by avalanches from the heights above—a castle in ruins, which once belonged to the Bishops of Brixen, and contained the retinue of the commander of this district. Though only thirty years have passed since it was inhabited, it is now in ruins, overgrown with ivy, and huge masses of the ruin lie detached, with several young trees, thirty feet high, growing on them. The more massive a human work is, the more calculated, apparently, to defy the encroachments of time, the more signally, and I think the more solemnly, at last does it show the triumph of the conqueror. An hour more brought us up another ascent to Piève d'Andraz, where my companion, who was an actuary of the Landgericht, or Tyrolese Court of Justice, had to stay on his duties. After being parted for a little time, I thought when we met again that he would have kissed me for joy. Just before we arrived at Piève d'Andraz we had a glorious prospect. Monte Civita, with a hundred peaks, lay to my left, at about five miles' distance, closing up the loveliest valley I ever saw, through which a stream

runs that divides Italy from the Tyrol. Before me, between two closer peaks, lay Monte Marmoletta, his head clothed in eternal snow, and his waist braced with glaciers; and just to the left the little village of Piève, to which I was going, with its spire and twelve houses. To-morrow, all day, if I can move at least,\* I will go through the haunts of this people. I am now writing in the stove-room, public-room, or whatever it is to be called, the only sitting-room in the cottage, surrounded by shepherds who have come in wet through, and are discussing their supper and their sour wine—a new scene of life; but I am more at home with them than in Cheltenham. My guide is supping with me—an honest, modest Italian—on some dish whose composition I can not guess, and dare not ask.

Botzen, September 27, Kaiserkrone Hotel.

I have just finished a letter to you, but still I must begin another, that I may put down my impressions while they are fresh. For I feel strongly that, in this world, things can be felt but once; you can not recall impressions. You recall only part of them, softened and altered, bearing the same relation to the impression itself that the mellowed Italian does to the original Latin. Pictures, scenery, persons, you can feel them in this world but once. The first time never returns. So I write now, that whatever I have to say may be fresh and living. Memory retains things, but only as a herbarium holds plants; they become colorless and withered after a time, retaining only the shape of what they were, and even that distorted. I closed my last letter at Corfara, after getting in, drenched and half frozen, to a miserable little inn, resorted to by the shepherds when their day's work is done. Twenty or more sat at tables round me, redolent of garlic, sheep, and tobacco. I make it a duty to feel myself at home in every society—so I pushed half my supper across to one of them, to his evident surprise, and afterwards spread out my map, when the whole party crowded round me, and I delighted them by pointing out to each his native valley or village. A little after five next morning I threw myself out of bed. The sky was just light enough for me to see that the clouds were gone; and by the time I was dressed, and had packed up my knapsack, the prelude to a brilliant day had begun. I set out with a man to carry my knapsack, for I had a journey before me which all told me was impossible; but, as it was Saturday, I determined to reach Botzen, the nearest town, and not spend Sunday in the cold mountains. Snow had fallen the night before, and our path was slippery, up hill and steep, and by the time we got to Castleruth my guide was done up. So I took the knapsack on my own shoulders, and pushed on down a most steep mountain, which fatigued me more than the ascent, and reached Botzen before nine in the evening. The valley through which I passed is a very remarkable one. In it are mountains of dolomite, peculiar from the sharpness and ruggedness of their peaks, being cleft by thousands of deep fissures, perfectly bare, and rising up in all manner of fantastic forms. It was a glorious day all through, and the sun glittered against the white dolomite crags as if they had been silver. A Tyrolese valley on a sunny day, sleeping in the light and rich tints, is exquisitely beautiful. Above Castleruth I paused to look down upon the village below. It lay some miles before me, deep down, but still far higher than Botzen, to which I was going. A rich deep autumn tint covered all the undulations and woods and meadows, and the massy peaks, rearing themselves out of it in strange contrast, enhanced the loveliness of the whole. From Castleruth the way was steep, so that it could only be descended by small zigzags, till I came to a bridge thrown by a single arch of wood over the Eisach into the road which I quitted some days ago at Mittenwald. I now re-entered it twelve miles above Botzen. By this time the scenery had somewhat changed its character. Vines, which I had not seen for a fortnight, festooned themselves in rich profusion over trellis-work.

\* He had severely strained a sinew in his ankle.



Rich yellow pumpkins lay delicious-looking on the ground, and the whole aspect of the country announced that I was near the land of cloudless skies.

At the table-d'hôte here I met with an Englishman—the first I have seen for many days. He has been fifteen years in Germany—has married a German lady, and is settled on the Elbe in Bohemia.

September 28.

To-day, instead of going on as I had intended, I made an excursion with Mr. — to the summit of the Mindola Mountain, the foot of which is about eight miles from hence. We started at half-past six A.M., and got back by eight at night. The day, which at first promised to be cloudy, became bright as time passed on; and by the time we were at the top, every distant peak was clear. The view from the top was a noble one. The valley of the Adige lay stretched before us, nearly as far as Meran to the left, down towards Trent to the right, and in the centre the broad opening of the three valleys with the junction of the Adige and Eisach just above Botzen, which seemed close beneath us. In the distance beyond the valley towered up the dolomite mountains which I passed on Saturday, together with many others which I had not before seen: three lakes lay below me, with villages and innumerable houses spreading the valley and hill-sides. My opinion of Tyrolese character is much lowered. Their virtues are primitive, certainly—the virtues of human nature without principle; such as all people have who live scattered, and are not subjected to those allurements which come from the congregation of numbers, from trade and polished life. They are hospitable, simple, honest; but this only so long as they have no temptation to be otherwise. As soon as a valley has become the resort of travellers, and traffic has of course increased, they become as knowing and as extortionate as the inhabitants of any country. They are said to be very religious, and if chapels, crosses, masses, prayers without end, constitute religion, certainly they are. But their religion seems only a spell or charm valuable to keep them safe from danger; and I call that not religion, but cowardice. There is a picture in the gallery at Munich, of which you see many engravings throughout the country, representing a priest and boy attacked by brigands. The priest holds up to their gaze the host, while the boy raises a lamp to let the light fall full upon it. The robbers cower down and relax their grasp upon their victims, awed by the mysterious symbols of religion. This is called the triumph of faith. It conveys exactly my present notion of the religion of the Tyrolese. I do not call that faith—it is paltry, abject cowardice. There are men who would rob and murder; but because a mystery is held before them which may strike them dead, they tremble, and give up the enterprise. It is very necessary to make this distinction, because Newman and his party have introduced a language now popular, according to which religion consists in awe and veneration. The more of these you have, the more religious you are. But these are only religious feelings if they are felt for true objects. A man who crouches before a crucifix, or trembles before the sacrament, and does not bow his whole heart in adoration of the good, the holy, the true, is not religious, but superstitious. They want to show that superstition in itself is good. I say superstition has no religious element in it at all. It is all cowardice. And a man who walks into a church with his hat on his head, breaks images remorselessly to pieces, tosses consecrated bread out of the window or treads it under foot, and yet prostrates his heart to goodness and nobleness, loving, honoring, and cultivating all that, is the man in whom awe and reverence have their right places, though foolish people would call him irreverent.

You can not conceive how England is detested throughout Germany. The "*Allgemeine Zeitung*," the leading newspaper, is perpetually attacking us—our behavior in India, our religious hypocrisy, our slavery to forms and

fashions, our commercial policy, etc. A short time ago the "Times" had, in some article, remarked upon the great advantage derived by Germany from the English travellers who pass through it. Upon which the "Zeitung" replied, that if a few inn-keepers rejoiced at this, the whole nation mourned. "Only let God deliver us from the affliction of that horrid nation passing through our towns and besetting us like a plague of flies in our diligences, hotels, walks, with their stupid faces, their vulgarity, their everlasting inquisitiveness about hotels and sight-seeing, and utter inability to appreciate any thing higher, and it would be a day of jubilee for all Germany." I do not give the words, but that was the purport of the article. The baroness gave me a letter to an Augustinian priest living in Meran, the author of the best guide to the Tyrol, who has explored himself every corner of it, in order that I might ascertain from him whether it would be dangerous, at this late season of the year, to cross the glaciers with crampons on the feet into the Oetz Thal. He received me very courteously in a room most plainly furnished, containing little more than a table covered with books and writing materials, and a few chairs. A bedroom which I saw through an open door was equally simple—no carpet, no curtains. He told me he thought I might venture with a guide by one path that he pointed out. Accordingly, this morning at six o'clock I set out, the first four hours of my path lying on the high-road to Innsbruck. But it soon came on to rain heavily, and I reached this hole of a place by nine o'clock, drenched through once more, the clouds hanging round me so low and dense that it would have been absurd to proceed farther. Ah! well, I suppose I must give up the grand glaciers. Six months hence what will it matter? And, after all, I do the whole of this more as a duty than because I can produce any real emotion of interest in my heart. I hold it a duty to see what can be done by the bracing up of my nervous system, and one mountain is almost as good as another for that. As soon as the fine weather sets in in earnest I turn north, and shall settle in some German place where I can get on a little with the language, for here without books I can do nothing. What I do learn by conversation is but provincialisms and patois.

Innsbruck, October 8.

Here I am again, my pedestrian excursion being over. And now, to take up the thread where it last broke off. I had reached the top of the Stelvio, just after wading ankle-deep through snow and slush, up the most wonderful road in Europe. As usual, I did it fast, accomplishing in six hours and a half what a man in the hotel-book boasted to have done in nine; nay, four miles more—for he started from Prad, and I had a full hour's work to get to Prad. When I got to the very summit, faint with exertion, the clouds hid the grand view from me; and I went on for an hour more of descent, to a single house on the bleak mountain-side, which is at once the custom-house and a hotel—a massive building of enormous stones, built to keep off the avalanches, if possible. In this lofty spot I got tolerable accommodation. As I had missed the grand view from the summit, I went back next morning so far to try my chance again, through snow which had fallen in the night as deep as my knee, and on drifts deeper than the hip. But a grand sight awaited me at the top—the sun shining on the magnificent Orteler Spitze, whose peak of snow glittered in brilliant contrast to the bare, bleak rocks of his sides, down which, as if in streams, his glaciers, glittering brightly too, descended into the valley. I had a curious series of manœuvres to get rid of an oily, stupid Italian. What a relief it was! I can not tell you how the love of solitude has grown upon me. I can enjoy these mountains, with their sombre pine woods, and their wild sights and sounds, only when I am alone. Rocks and crags crumbling down in a long line of ruin; uprooted trees hurled headlong, bark and branches gone, and their black stumps dotting the mount-

ain far above, where they were before the avalanche or the torrent reached them; wild birds soaring and shrieking as you pass along, disturbed perhaps from their feast on a dead horse; the clouds sailing solemnly in long white lines above, or wreathing themselves like living shrouds round the crags. There is grandeur and wonder in all these things; but the spell is broken if human beings are near you. I spent Sunday at Nauders—a delightful spot, close to the Pass of Finstermünz. After dinner I strolled down to the Finstermünz Pass—about an hour's walk—that I might see as much of it as possible, though I had to walk through it again on Monday on my way. I was disappointed. The Stelvio is more wonderful, and more grand too. It is a narrow cleft in the mountain, through which the River Inn gushes on its way to Innsbruck. The cliffs on each side rise steep and precipitous, leaving only room for the stream and the road by its side. The descent to it from Nauders is very rapid, which adds to the grandeur. The Inn roars and thunders through it, and I took pleasure in watching the fir-tree stumps, which are cut by the woodmen above in certain lengths, and then committed to the stream to be carried down to the valleys. Some pieces stemmed all falls and projecting points gallantly; others sunk for a time, and then you saw them emerging below, conquerors out of trial. Some were stranded, and left high and dry upon the bank, or on rocks in the centre of the stream; others had got out of the current, and were carried round a protecting point into still water, either stationary, or floating slowly back instead of on, as if there had been a destiny before them, and that destiny unfulfilled; while others besides them, not their superiors in activity or strength, were steadily buffeting their way forward and home. What an image of life! Two days more brought me to Innsbruck, through fine scenery, by the side of the Inn all the way

Schaffhausen, October 11.

I have taken my path through Switzerland, and pass to-day, Sunday, here. The hotel is about two miles from the town, and just opposite the Falls of the Rhine. I was disappointed at the first view from this place, as it is higher than the river, and half a mile from the Fall, which looks insignificant. The river turns at right angles by the Fall, and opposite exactly is Weber's hotel. Yesterday, after arriving, I went down to the water's edge, crossed where you see the dotted line, and got exactly beside the Fall, midway between the top and bottom. Here is far the finest view—the only spot where you can understand and take in its grandeur. You see the mighty river above, a sheet of glass, pouring over the ledge, as if it would overwhelm you. The next moment it flashes past you like lightning, convulsed into a sea of foam, and loses itself below in a cloud of spray, which rises eighty feet at least in height. In this spray an iris, delicately beautiful, was visible, rising out of the very depths below, and arching itself up twenty feet above the highest level of the water. In the centre of the Fall two tall rocks rear themselves out of the froth, the river thundering and foaming down their sides. To the foot of one of these I got the boatmen to row me, through the foam under the Fall, and, after some tossing, landed, climbed up a slippery path to the top, and sat there, the Fall being above and below me, and on both sides; but this view is not equal to the side one. On a near view I felt the full magnificence of the Fall. The blending of the colors was very singular. In places the lights on the descending waters were of a lovely grass-green, while the shadows were warm, almost purple. The full height is seventy feet; but this is lessened by the descent being made partially over a declivity of irregular ledges before the grand leap is taken. The snow mountains of the Bernese Oberland extend themselves in long line opposite the window of the room in which I write. My heart bounds at the unexpected sight, and I am half tempted to set off in that direction to-morrow. The weather has once more

become warm and lovely, so different from the bleak weather I had in the Tyrol; and if it were only one week earlier in the year, I certainly should go. The well-known form of the Jungfrau cuts into the clear sky, white and sharp, with that peculiar outline which you only see in this clear atmosphere—looking, indeed, as if there were no intermediate atmosphere. Last night I sat up long in my bedroom, unable to get to sleep, watching the Fall of the Rhine by moonlight. The pale beams fell beautifully on the white foam, making the dark rocks darker still by contrast. The spray rose up, floating like thinnest silver tissue; and the incessant roar of the falling water, softened by the distance into a murmur like that of a forest shaking in the wind, might have served for a soldier's dirge or a poet's lullaby. It was singularly solemn: stars silent and clear above, looking out of a sky of infinite blue; no wind, no cloud, and the stone statues on the terrace below (something like our own dear terrace at Aix-les-Bains) glittering cold and white, like spectres gazing on the convulsion of the Rhine beneath them. An English family and myself are alone in this great hotel, yet I have not offered to perform the service for them. I can not. Even to read prayers seems an effort beyond my power. More and more I feel that I am not a minister, and never can be one. Exercise has not braced my nerves, nor destroyed the phantoms, if they be phantoms, which rise before me. So long as I am awake, I can keep unpleasant thoughts away; but directly I sleep, the power of banishing them is gone. I sleep but little; yet that is no gain, for my half-waking dreams are worst.

Heidelberg, October 13 (Tuesday).

Here I am at last, having exactly carried out all my intentions to the letter; and here I think I shall stay for some weeks at least, as living is tolerably reasonable, and there are but few English. Moreover, the scenery is perhaps the most beautiful which this part of Germany affords. The views in all directions are fine up and down the river, and the ruins of the old Castle are always a delightful place to wander in. I was much tempted to make an excursion in Switzerland, especially the evening before I came away from Schaffhausen. I never saw a scene more lovely than that which presented itself from the terrace before the hotel. The evening was cloudless, the air peculiarly still and clear, and the long range of snow mountains in the Bernese Oberland, Glarus, etc., as distinct almost as the Malvern Hills. A glorious sunset lighted them up with a rich glow, which by degrees subsided into a delicate rose blush, and then a minute after the snow was left opaque and cold. I can not describe the effect of this singular transition. The paleness of the snow is quite of a livid hue, like the color of a corpse, and gave me a very strange sensation—almost a shudder. The beauty of this spectacle filled me with the wish for enterprise, and I walked into Schaffhausen, two miles from the hotel, to inquire the hours of the diligences to Zurich. However, an old guide who was in the hotel, when I spoke to him of the beauty of the weather, dryly shook his head, and said, "Nein; I have been a guide twenty-five years. Take my word for it, it is going to rain." At this moment not a cloud was to be seen; but a little after midnight the rain was falling from a sky without a star, and the dawn broke upon a desolate and dreary prospect of mud and puddles.

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Hôtel du Prince Charles, Heidelberg, November 11.

I have at last decided upon my course with respect to Christ Church. You were perfectly right, I was most unwise to bare my feelings even to the extent I did. A man who "wears his heart upon his sleeve" must not be surprised if he finds it a temptation "for daws to peck at." That I said as much as I did to any human being I now deeply regret. But I shall go on doing so to the end of the chapter. Sympathy is too exquisitely dear to me to resist the

temptation of expecting it; and then I could bite my tongue with vexation for having babbled out truths too sincere and childlike to be intelligible. But as soon as the fit of misanthropy is passed, that absurd human heart with which I live trusts and confides again; and so I go on alternately, rich and bankrupt in feeling. Yet, yet, say what I will—when any one soothes me with the semblance of sympathy—I can not for the life of me help baring my whole bosom in gratitude and trust. A very expensive, perhaps a generous, but certainly a very weak way of giving lessons in anatomy gratis—vivisection performed by the lecturer upon himself! Mr. — has mistaken me. He thinks I am disinclined to the work of active good towards my fellow-creatures. God knows it is the only one wish I have on earth to know *how* to do it; and I am sure I set heart and soul to work, till I found that I was at work the wrong way; and I do not see that it is very wise to go on pouring water into reservoirs when you find that there are holes out of which it runs as fast as you pour. The Danaïdes did that; but the Danaïdes were in hell. I shall now take my own course, and permit advice from no one. I have given up Christ Church, and now the question is, what is to be the next step? I have two or three plans. The only one I shall mention at present, as the one that I think I shall try first, is, not to give up the ministry, but to make the experiment of working in a country parish, in which I have to deal with the poor only. For the rich I am neither mentally nor morally qualified. There is something either in my manner, language, or tone of thought which they will not brook; and then I have not calmness of nerve or meekness enough to prevent being agitated, and treating this in return with pride and coldness. In this way ministerial work is not likely to get on. But I am not yet *certain* that I could do nothing with the poor. If I had the work to myself, and could carry out my own plans, I have still a lingering hope that I could go on cheerfully, and not unsuccessfully. Will you ask my father if he would kindly be on the look-out for something of this sort, that I may stay in Cheltenham after my return as short a time as possible? I should not like more than a thousand people, at the very utmost. A house would be desirable. I should prefer agricultural poor, and a non-resident rector. Such things are perpetually offering themselves, and there is no need to be in a hurry. My mind has gone through a complete revolution in many things; I am resolved now to act, and feel, and think alone; your letter and others have completely determined me.

My life goes on here as usual; I am asked out a great deal, almost always in a family way, and have become very intimate with some families. I preach every Sunday. People have come to church who had for long absented themselves. Some Socinians, too, go whenever I preach, so that my absence from England may not be altogether useless; yet I am not, and never shall be, at my ease with the upper classes.

Hôtel du Prince Charles, Heidelberg, November 30.

I propose to leave Heidelberg in about a week or ten days from the present time, so that after the receipt of this letter it will not be of any use to write to me. This morning my father's letter arrived, by which I find he is already on the look-out for a curacy. I confess I feel strangely disinclined to work again. A feeling so gloomy and desolate appears to rest upon my heart when I think of the drudgery and apparent fruitlessness of my ministerial-career, that I can hardly make up my mind to believe that I am really about to make the attempt again. It will, I fear, be only an attempt; and the last, if it should result in failure. What makes it seem more dreary is, that I have found a home and extraordinary kindness among the congregation here; and in less than two months a warmer union has grown up between us than I have had in Cheltenham after a residence of some years. To-day I mentioned my resolve, and I can not tell you how I have been

touched by the unfeigned regret which has been exhibited. I have had more proofs of my ministry telling here already than during my whole stay in Cheltenham. One family brought over a whole library of Swedenborg's books. They have, it appears, not opened them since I came, and have voluntarily promised not to study them any more. A Socinian confessed that the heart's *want* of the atonement had suggested itself to her strongly. And three young men of high talent, Socinians, come regularly, and listen with the deepest attention. All this is encouraging. It has brightened my stay here much, but it has made the return very painful. I wish I could have so arranged that we could have passed the winter here. However, this is now out of the question, and I must make up my mind calmly and fairly to make the experiment of work once more, if I can. But I shall be able to judge of this better when I get back to England. Since I wrote the above, I have been much tried by the unexpected warmth with which the congregation here have testified their regard at my departure. Two young, thoughtful Socinians came in tears, and told me it would be the quenching of their spiritual life. A Socinian lady wept bitterly. Two more have been in tears this very evening, warmly urging me to stay. A French gentleman has been equally urgent, and two more families have argued for hours. I may say it to you, the request that I should remain has been unanimous. And yet I feel, on looking over the past, that all this bright sky would be clouded over once more, excited hope would end in failure. They have strangely overrated me, and I know that I could not fulfill their anticipations. Then to feel estrangement again, to see suspicion awoken, misunderstandings arise, and to give up another congregation in bitterness, would be too much to bear. Reluctantly, and with feelings strongly inclined to stay, I have all but decided not to comply with their request. Friday—I have been again greatly tempted to reconsider the question. There is a congregation earnestly wishing me to remain, not from popular preaching, but because they think they are getting good spiritually and morally. Individuals among them have been roused, and say out plainly that they are anxious not to be deserted in this crisis of their mental history—that Heidelberg would be no longer the same, in the event of their losing their weekly instruction. Is this a call from God or not? Then, on the other hand, the emolument would be very trifling—though Heidelberg is cheaper to live in than England. I should lose the time I remain here in English work, though I should gain in mental education. Now balance all these things together, and tell me what you think, and also what my father thinks.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### OXFORD.

Return to Cheltenham.—Surrender of Curacy of Christ Church.—He accepts the Charge of St. Ebbe's, Oxford.—Position in Relation to the High Church and the Evangelical Parties.—Results of his Work on the Parish of St. Ebbe's and on himself.—Trinity Chapel, Brighton, is offered to him.—He refuses, but afterwards accepts the offer.—Sad Presentiments.

AFTER an absence of nearly three months, Mr. Robertson returned to Cheltenham. He had during his stay at Heidelberg surrendered the curacy of Christ Church with feelings of unmixed pain.

My father (he writes from Cheltenham, March 2, 1847) showed me your letter to him containing an inquiry respecting my health, and I answer it in his stead. I have been very unwell, thoroughly done up, mentally and bodily. I wandered six weeks in the Tyrol alone, trying the effect of mountain air and hard exercise. After that I spent about nine weeks at Heidelberg, where I took the duty, got much interested in and attached to the congregation, studied Goethe, Schiller, and Krause, and got back something like calmness and health again.

I am now well, but idle and useless. I have given up the curacy of Christ Church. If I take work, it must be single-handed. I am afraid I can no longer brook to walk in leading-strings; but, however, enough of this.

As his health increased, and his mind recovered from the tempest which had swept over it, he began to be impatient for some labor. The Bishop of Calcutta offered him a chaplaincy in his diocese, with the promise of a canonry, but he did not wish to leave home. He then wrote to the Bishop of Oxford, with whom, as Archdeacon Wilberforce, he had been acquainted at Winchester, placed himself at his lordship's disposal, and asked for some employment.

The bishop at once offered him the charge of St. Ebbe's, Oxford. The church was situated in one of the worst parts of the town. The parish had not been regularly worked for some time, owing to the severe illness of the incumbent. It was a difficult post, and the emolument was very small. Mr. Robertson hesitated before accepting it, not on account of the disadvantages, but because of his disagreement with the known views of the Bishop of Oxford.

Before my son (writes Captain Robertson) went to St. Ebbe's, he saw the bishop in London, and frankly told him that he did not hold, and therefore could not preach, the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. The bishop replied: "I give my clergy a large circle to work in, and if they do not step beyond that I do not interfere. I shall be glad, however, to hear your views on the subject." An hour's conversation followed, and at the close his lordship said, "Well, Mr. Robertson, you have well maintained your position, and I renew my offer." It was at once accepted.

From his connection with the Bishop of Oxford, it has been hinted that Mr. Robertson sympathized at this time with the views of the High-Church party. It may be well here to set that question at rest. He had no sympathy with their views; but he had a great deal of sympathy with the men who held them, with their self-devotion, and with their writings. He revered the self-sacrificing work which they were performing among poor and neglected parishes. He said that, as a body, they had reasserted the doctrine of a spiritual resurrection, which had been almost put out of sight by the "Evangelical" party. He read Newman's Sermons with profit and delight till the day of his death. There was no book which he studied more carefully or held in higher honor than the

“Christian Year.” It seemed to him that some of its poems were little short of inspiration. He saw in the importance which the Tractarians gave to forms a valuable element which he never lost sight of in his teaching. Only, while they seemed to say that forms could produce life, he said that forms were necessary only to support life; but for that they were necessary. To use his own illustration: bread will not create life, but life can not be kept up without bread. On the subject of baptism he felt no sympathy with the Evangelical view, which left it doubtful whether the baptized child was a child of God or not; but because the Tractarian view declared that all *baptized* persons were children of God, he could so far sympathize with it. But on all other points, starting as he did from the basis that baptism declared and did not create the *fact* of sonship, his difference was radical. The persecution, too, which this party suffered secured his sympathy. He even believed that it had received but scant justice from one with whom he largely agreed. He maintained that Dr. Arnold did not stand quite impartially between the Evangelicals and Tractarians, but judged the former less severely than the latter. On the other hand, it must be said that he himself showed but scant justice to the Evangelical party. He seems to have imputed to all its adherents the views of the “Record” newspaper. He sometimes forces conclusions upon them which the great body of them would repudiate. He overstates, unconsciously, some of their opinions. If there was any intolerance in his nature, it oozed out here. But surrounded as he was by them at Brighton; constantly attacked, by some manfully, by others in an underhand manner; the victims of innuendos and slander, it was difficult for him always to be smooth-tongued. Nor was he now or afterwards the leader or the servant of any party in the Church. He stood alone. He fought out his principles alone. He has been called a follower of Mr. Maurice; but though holding Mr. Maurice in veneration, he differed on many and important points from both him and Professor Kingsley. He was the child of no theological father. At this time, however, when a new impulse had come upon his life—when he was unshackled by a subordinate position—he was least of all thinking of party opposition or party teaching. One was his Captain, even Christ; and he did not care, provided he fought under Him the good fight, what regiment he belonged to. All were his brothers in arms who were loyal to his Master’s cause. He was ready, under great worldly disadvantages, to lead the forlorn hope which the bishop offered him. He did not accept it with any bright expectations.



His experience as he states in the following letter, had been very painful :

Cheltenham, May 3, 1847.

I have just accepted St. Ebbe's, Oxford (offered by the bishop), after once refusing it. But as he seemed desirous I should take it, I consented, though reluctantly. It is a forlorn hope, I fear, and the stipend is miserable ; \* \* \* and altogether I feel depressed at the prospect of a residence in Oxford, with its cold, formal, forbidding conventionalisms. But for the present it seems the path of duty, and I am prepared to give it a fair trial. Nor do I ever expect to find the line of duty—lying, as it does, up the hill, with the cross at the top of it—a pleasant path.

\* \* \* I have lately, as I told you, given up Christ Church here with feelings of inexpressible pain. A ministry of twilight, at the best, and difficulty, has closed. Every effort has been crowned with the most signal failure, and I shrink sometimes almost in torture from the idea of beginning work again with the possibility of five such years once more before me. This is not an encouraging tone of mind to begin a ministry with, so beset with difficulties as St. Ebbe's. However, as I certainly have no earthly inducement to take it, perhaps the work may be blest, even though mine.

In appearance, at least, that work was blest. The place entirely yielded to him. The usual attendants of the church, as well as the rough and poor people of the parish, among whom he labored faithfully, made themselves over to him at once. The undergraduates, a sensitive touch-stone of a man's worth, dropped in one by one at first, and then rushed to hear him in crowds.\* "Every Sunday," says a friend who visited him at Oxford, "the church was thronged with these young men, who hung breathlessly on every word he uttered." Here, then, for the first time, he began to make himself felt, and to feel what he could do. Here, for the first time, he was entirely free ; able to say, without opposition from without, without a shadow of inward restraint, the thing in his own heart. Here, too, for the first time, perhaps, he rested firmly on principles which he had secured at the price of a terrible spiritual contest. He became more peaceful. The dark shadow of failure began to pass away. But he was ill at ease ; life lay upon him very heavily ; it seemed, do what he might, that he could not be happy.

It was now that, after two months of work at St. Ebbe's, Trinity Chapel, Brighton, vacant by the retirement of Mr. Kennaway, was offered to him. He refused at once.

He thought it would be a discourtesy to the bishop, and a failure in manly duty, to surrender St. Ebbe's. The material advantages he would gain made him suspicious of himself. The following letters give the further history of this trans-

\* The "Saturday Review" has entered into an elaborate argument to prove the impossibility of this. I can only say that I am not responsible for the account. It was told to me by an eye-witness, who may have exaggerated what he saw.

action, exhibit the self-sacrificing spirit which inspired his life, and will close this brief record of his Oxford ministry :

Oxford, July 3, 1847.

My plans, as you are rightly informed, are altered, and I am only waiting till the bishop can release me by sending a substitute, to go to Brighton. I refused Trinity at first distinctly ; but after a day or two a letter came expressing the regret of the trustees, Rev. James Anderson, Lord Teignmouth, and Mr. Thornton, at my decision, and asking me to reconsider it. At the same time they inclosed a letter from the Bishop of Oxford, in answer to a request from them, which gave them permission to open the negotiation again, by releasing me, if I wished, from my engagement. I should tell you that this letter came just as I was in great perplexity about certain difficulties which had arisen in the way of a residence in Oxford, and singularly coincidental in point of time. I therefore referred it to the bishop's decision, asking his opinion ; not as to what he would like, for I knew he would wish me to keep Oxford ; nor as to what would be most advantageous to me, for £300 a year is better than £115, but what he thought my duty : considering the sphere of usefulness apparent in Oxford, and the drawbacks in a watering-place ministry, such as the temptations to vanity, the improbability of influencing character deeply, etc. He replied that he thought it my duty to accept Trinity ; so I go reluctantly. \* \* \* I much, deeply regret that difficulties have prevented my remaining. So grand an opening for important, but not glittering usefulness, I shall probably never have again. However, I believe, if I can read my own heart, that I have acted honestly. I am sure I go to a place from which I shrink, and with small hope and much misgiving.

However, I will try to do my work. My life, if I may judge by the decline of mental accuracy, and strength, and the weakening of nerve, has got more than half-way, and the rest is down-hill. The half-way house is behind ; and if Brighton be another form of Cheltenham, home can not be very far off. I am getting tired. And the complexion of my spontaneous thoughts now is increasing the contemplation of rest—rest in God and Love—deep repose in that still country where the mystery of this strange life is solved, and the most feverish heart lays down its load at last.

## CHAPTER V.

BRIGHTON—1847, 1848.

Arrival at Brighton.—Trinity Chapel.—Death of his Infant Daughter.—Self-analysis and Resolutions on entering on his Ministry at Brighton.—First Sermon.—Characteristics of his Teaching.—Rapid Increase of his Congregation.—Appreciated by Servants and Working-men.—Wide Sphere of Work at Brighton.—The Questions raised by the Revolutions of 1848, and how he met them.—Afternoon Lectures on the First Book of Samuel.—Results of these Lectures.—Foundation of the Working-man's Institute.—He is asked to Deliver the Opening Lecture.—His Answer, and his Opinions on the Institution.—Delivery of the First Address.—His boldness of Speech.—Endeavor to reconcile Rich and Poor.—Qualifications which fitted him to be a Mediator.

Letters from August 9, 1847, to January 5, 1849.

IN the August of 1847 Mr. Robertson came to Brighton. The short period during which he had preached at Oxford was the pause which always occurs after a revolution of thought, before the new ideas have gained sufficient strength

and roundness to be used with ease. At Oxford he was like the swimmer who has for the first time ventured into deep water; at Brighton he struck out boldly into the open sea. There was no hesitation, no reticence in his teaching. In the silence and solitude of the mountains of the Tyrol, his "soul, left to explore its own recesses, and to feel its nothingness in the presence of the Infinite," had fixed its foundations deep and sure. From henceforward his religious convictions never wavered, and the principles of his teaching never changed.

The sunny aspect of his new home pleased him. The bracing air, the clear sea, and the breezy expanse of pasture above the town, seemed to sympathize with his active frame, his free mind, and his large heart. The constant change of light and shadow on the wide waters of the Channel, and on the grassy bosses and slopes of the Downs, freed the scenery from the monotony which made him impatient; and the magnificent cloud-land, and the sunsets which adorn the evenings of Brighton, came upon him then, and always, with a surprise of pleasure. It was his custom, when worn out with the excitement of work, or when he was preparing in thought his sermons, to walk along the edge of the cliffs, or over the rolling waves of the green hills, and, sitting down where he could command a full view of sea and sky, restore his heart with the calm, or awake his imagination with the beauty of the landscape.

But, on his first coming to Brighton, he had but few moments of quiet or enjoyment. He was wholly occupied in house-hunting, and with the arrangements necessary for assuming the direction of Trinity Chapel. The following letters sum up the history of the first few months of his life at Brighton:

9 Montpelier Terrace, Brighton, August 9, 1847.

MY DEAR —, —At last I am able to tell you that we have fixed upon a house—the above being the address—into which we hope to move to-morrow. \* \* \* I can form no conception yet of how I shall like my work. Brighton is too large to have the disagreeable peculiarities of Cheltenham; and Kennaway's congregation seems to be chiefly composed of tradesmen. That will relieve me from much that I expected of unpleasantness. Still, looking at the many disadvantages there are, I have great misgivings as to that kind of success which a proprietary chapel needs—the filling of seats, etc. But Brighton seems a healthy place, and I am sure it is bracing. My wife is decidedly better than in Cheltenham; and the heir to my estates and title spends hours on the beach, tossing stones into the sea, without speculating about their future destinies, or the probable depth of the ocean into which they fall.

9 Montpelier Terrace, Brighton, November 29, 1847.

MY DEAR —, —I only write you one line to tell you of a sad loss and disappointment we have just sustained. My wife has been prematurely con-

finer, and the little girl, a perfectly beautiful little thing, is dead. I have just returned from putting my little beautiful one myself into her grave, after a last look at her calm, placid countenance lying in her coffin. It was by starlight, with only the sexton present; but it was more congenial to my heart to bury her so than in the midst of a crowd, in the glaring daylight, with a service gabbled over her. In the infinite expanse of darkness there was more of heaven and more of God, to my soul at least, and more of that deep, still rest, more profound than death, of which death is but a shadow, for which we are all craving, and in the depths of which we shall soon be—how soon! My poor wife is sadly cut up, and looking ghastly and haggard; but Taylor says she is going on perfectly well. I was away in London when it took place (Friday), and did not get home till Saturday night to be startled by the unexpected news. How I got through yesterday's services I scarcely know, unprepared and upset as I was; but I did get through. I am very much disappointed, but I *feel* that Infinite Love guides all.

An account of his ministry at Brighton can not have a better introduction than the following, written on his arrival at Brighton. It is full of careful foresight of the difficulties likely to beset him. It marks the earnestness with which he studied his own heart, and resolved to do his duty:

1. I want two things—habit of order and *de suite*. I begin many things and re-begin, each time with greater disrelish and self-distrust. At last, life will be a broken series of unfinished enterprises.

Hence, I must resolve to finish; and to do this, I must not undertake till I have well weighed, *e. g.*, I will not now give up German. I will study Scripture-books thoroughly through, histories separately and thoroughly.

I am conscious of having developed my mind and character more truly, and with more fidelity at Winchester than anywhere. Looking back, I think I perceive reasons for this. First, I went out little: hence, perfected what I undertook before fresh impulses started up to destroy the novelty and interest of the impulse already set in motion. It came to its limit unexhausted, *e. g.*, in studying Edwards.

Hence, I think, it will be wise at Brighton to go out little; and even to exercise self-denial in this. But I will not commit myself to any plan by *expressed* resolve. I have now only a few years to live. "Mein Gott! ernst ist das Leben! möchte ich es fühlen!"

My danger is excitability—even in Scripture conversations was it not so? This makes me effeminate, irresolute, weak in character—led by circumstances, not bending them by strong will to my own plan and purpose. Therefore, I must seek calm in regular duty, avoiding desultory reading—desultory visits.

2. *Artificial Excellences*.—Goodness demands a certain degree of nerve, impulse, sudden inspiration. Characters too much trained miss these. Some turn their eyes perpetually on self in painful self-examination. Suspicion destroys the *élan* of virtue, its freshness, grace, beauty, and spontaneity. Artificial merits are like artificial flowers—scentless. Cultivate natural, not unnatural excellences.

3. *Explanations* are bad things. "Man betrügt sich oder den andern, und meist beide. Götz." You preserve your own dignity by not entering into them. The character which can not defend itself is not worth defending.

4. *My mind is difficult to get into activity*—unbewegsam. Therefore, in order to prepare for speaking, preaching, etc., it is good to take a stirring

book, even if not directly touching upon the subject in hand. Love is all with me. Mental power comes from interest in a subject. What I have to set in motion is some grand notion—such as duty, beauty, time in its rapid flight, etc.

He preached for the first time in Trinity Chapel on the 15th of August, 1847. His sermon, on a favorite subject—“The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified,” etc.—at once awoke criticism and interest. As his peculiar views developed themselves, many of the old congregation left the church. Their places were rapidly filled up. Thoughtful and eager-minded men came in, by degrees, from all parts of Brighton, attracted not only by his earnest eloquence, but by his original thought and clear reasoning. He clothed in fresh brightness the truths which, because their garments were worn out, men had ignorantly imagined to be exhausted. He drew out the living inspiration of the Bible, and especially of the historical portions of the Old Testament. He made men feel the life which ran through the doctrinal statements of the Prayer-Book. Whatever he touched sprang into being; and many of his hearers entered on a new existence. Other men who were engaged in the great questions of society and of the world, were drawn to his ministry by the wide knowledge which he showed of past history, and by the force with which he applied Christianity to the social problems of the present age. Young men eagerly listened to his delicate analysis of the human heart, and of those difficulties of religious thought which, even now presenting themselves for solution, had only then begun to agitate the mind of England. Others of a lighter cast came to enjoy the brilliant imagery and the rapid rush of clear language. Servants and working-men came to hear with reverence and affection a man who spoke as if his whole being were in the words he used, and who seemed to sympathize with their lives as none had ever done before.

The appreciation of his teaching by servants, a class seldom reached by an intellectual preacher, was remarkable. The story which follows is extracted from a short memoir published after his death:

On the morning of Christmas-day, 1847, scarcely five months after his arrival at Brighton, Mr. Robertson, on ascending to his reading-desk, found there a set of handsome prayer-books, which had been presented to him by the servants of families attending the chapel, as a Christmas offering. Naturally affected by this evidence of kindly feeling, he in his sermon took occasion to advert to the subject of presents, and drew a picture of the delight which would fill the heart of a fond brother who, on the morning of his birthday, should awake and find in his chamber a rose placed there by sis-

terly affection. The simple gift, almost valueless in itself, would be more prized by the brother's heart than a purse of gold. The application of the incident he left to those who could best understand its hidden meaning. The gift was subsequently acknowledged by the following letter:

"9 Montpelier Terrace, Brighton, December 27, 1847.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I should not satisfy my own heart if I were not to tell you how much I was gratified on Christmas-day by your thoughtful offering of the new books for Trinity Chapel. It would be injustice to you if I were to say this with the idea that it emanated from any personal feeling towards myself, who am as yet a stranger among you. I am persuaded that your higher motive was the wish to adorn the services of a house dedicated to the worship of God; but, as the minister of that house, it will not be out of place if the thanks are expressed by me. I feel that it was kindly imagined and delicately done; and I am the more touched by being told that all who joined in presenting it are in circumstances of life which make the offering doubly precious. I shall never read out of those books without the inspiring feeling that there are *hearts* around me. I am, my dear friends, your affectionate minister,

FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON."

As the congregation became larger, and he recognized the several elements which composed it, his sense of the importance of his work increased, and with that his interest in his duty.

And the town in which he was now placed opened to him a fitting field for his earnestness and his genius. The change from Cheltenham to Oxford had not been greater than was now the change from Oxford to Brighton. He had formerly left a half-fashionable place, with narrow interests and a confined sphere of thought, for one of the thinking centres of England, where all social, political, and theological questions were debated with as much eagerness as latitude. There he had easily taken his place as an inspiring and sympathizing teacher. He was now transferred to a town which more, perhaps, than any other in England has among its population the sharp contrasts which mutually irritate one another into aggressive life in London. He came into contact at Brighton with religious tendencies and sects as extreme as at Cheltenham, but they were opposed more strongly than at Cheltenham by a bold freedom of thought among the upper and lower classes, which tended in the former to carelessness or silent contempt for Christianity, and in the latter to open infidelity. He met with men of all classes, whose opinions had been formed and widened in the storm and stress of London life, and with others whose prejudices were as blind as those of the smallest village in England. He associated with clergymen of all religious denominations, who had rendered themselves known by their eloquence and their writings or by their active leadership of party. He mingled with persons of every shade of Conservatism and Liberalism, and,

among the working-men, with large numbers of hot and eager Chartists.

If he had been as fresh and enthusiastic as he had been six years before, he would, like a young soldier, have rejoiced at his position, placed thus in the fore-front of the battle. But, as we have seen, he was worn and weary.

He had a presentiment, which was not altogether painful to him, that his work—done as he did it, with a throbbing brain, with nerves strung to their utmost tension, and with a physical excitement which was all the more consuming from being mastered in its outward forms—would kill him in a few years. He resolved to crowd into this short time all he could. He had long felt that Christianity was too much preached as theology, too little as the religion of daily life; too much as a religion of feeling, too little as a religion of principles; too much as a religion only for individuals, too little as a religion for nations and for the world. He determined to make it bear upon the social state of all classes, upon the questions which agitated society, upon the great movements of the world.

Shortly after his arrival at Brighton, he had an opportunity for carrying out his intention. The great surge which took its impulse from the volcanic outburst of February, 1848, in Paris, rolled over half of Europe. The decrees of February 25, 26, by which Lamartine declared France republican, chimed in with the hopes of all the educated as well as uneducated minds among the working-classes. The cry of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and the demands based upon this watchword, created a wild fear in some Englishmen, and a wild joy in others, which were alike irrational. No man in society could be silent on these subjects. Mr. Robertson resolved not to be silent in the pulpit. His spirit was stirred within him, as the spirits of Coleridge and of Wordsworth had been at the beginning of a greater revolution. He rejoiced in the downfall of old oppressions; and in the "young cries of Freedom" he thought that he heard the wheels of the chariot of the Son of Man, coming nearer and nearer to vindicate the cause of the poor. He writes in 1848:

The world has become a new one since we met. To my mind, it is a world full of hope, even to bursting. I wonder what you think of all these tumults:

For all the past of time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever thought hath wedded fact.

Some outlines of a kingdom of Christ begin to glimmer, albeit very faintly, and far off, perhaps, by many, many centuries. Nevertheless, a few strokes

of the rough sketch by a master-hand are worth the seeing, though no one knows yet how they shall be filled up. And those bold, free, dashing marks are made too plainly to be ever done out again—made in blood, as they always are, and made somewhat rudely; but the Master-hand is visible through the great red splotches on the canvas of the universe. I could almost say sometimes, in fullness of heart, “Now let Thy servant depart in peace.”

I have been very much overdone by work here. It is extremely trying; full of encouragement, but full of a far larger amount of misunderstanding and dislike than I expected to meet with. And I work alone with “many adversaries,” and few to bless; but with a very distinct conviction that I am doing something; and for that I am grateful, for it is well-nigh the only thing that is worth the living for.

He had already begun, in January, 1848, a course of lectures on the first book of Samuel. In explaining the history contained in that book he necessarily entered on questions belonging to the life of society, and to the rise and progress of national ideas. At the very beginning of his exposition he was forced to speak of a great revolution. As he went on, he came into contact with the subject of the rights of property and the rights of labor;\* and, in the election of David instead of Saul, he was obliged to discuss the limits of authority, and how far an unjust or a weak king is a rightful ruler of a people. So there was scarcely a question debated in 1848 which was not brought before him. He did not refuse them. They were all treated of; but as Israelitish, not as modern questions. It was not his fault that these lectures, running side by side with the national convulsions and social excitement of Europe and England, had a double interest—an ancient and a modern one. It was not his fault that men did what he could not do in the pulpit, and applied the principles which he found in the first book of Samuel to the society and times in which they lived.

However, he irritated and terrified almost all parties in Brighton. A cry was raised against him. He was spoken of as a revolutionist and a democrat. An anonymous letter was sent to the bishop of the diocese complaining of a certain sermon, and accusing him of preaching on political subjects in a manner calculated—when men’s minds were excited by the events occurring on the Continent—to disturb still more the feelings of the working-men in Brighton. He answered that, if the principles revealed in the inspired history of Israelitish society happened to be universal, and to fit the events going on in 1848, it only proved the deep inspiration and universal character of the Bible, and he was not to be blamed. The following is the letter which he wrote to the bishop in answer to the accusation brought

\* See this subject fully carried out in Sermons (First Series) XVI. and XVIII.



against him. It shows not only how meekly he could reply, but also with what strange acuteness he felt these cowardly attacks. It is interesting also for the account which it gives of his way of composing his sermons.

MY LORD,—I wrote to Mr. Anderson at the same time that I wrote to your lordship, inclosing the sermon for his perusal, as you had requested him to make the investigation, and told him that I conscientiously believed the sermon to be almost sentence for sentence as it was delivered. I explained to him, at the same time, that, knowing it to be a sermon liable to be misunderstood, I had written it nearly all out the same night that it was preached, lest I should be compelled in self-defense to publish it, and that what I sent I believed to be in consequence quite complete. Moreover, I expected that your lordship would show it to my accuser, both in justice to him and in justice to me, and that he would have full opportunity of making any strictures upon it. I believe it is accurate even to words. I should say, too, that the word extempore does not exactly describe the way I preach. I first make copious notes; then draw out a form; afterwards write copiously, sometimes twice or thrice, the thoughts, to disentangle them, into a connected whole; then make a syllabus; and, lastly, a skeleton, which I take into the pulpit. May I be permitted to send your lordship the notes I made for this particular chapter, together with the syllabus, as an example of my plan, lest it should seem that, in preaching thus, I save myself toil? Indeed, being unable from nervousness to preach from a manuscript, and finding that the drain upon the mind necessary for conscientious preparation for preaching without a MS., in addition to other work, is telling very severely on my constitution, I have, by the advice of friends, relinquished all idea of retaining Trinity Chapel beyond this year, which I have already with deep regret intimated to Mr. Anderson. I confess that I wait with much anxiety your lordship's reply; for, though I know nothing was said that could lay me open to episcopal censure, it would pain me very nearly as much to know that your lordship's opinion was unfavorable to the view I have taken.

Will you permit me, my lord, to urge one thing in reply to the strong feeling which your letter to Mr. Anderson seems to imply has been excited by this sermon? It is a view I have heard again and again from the pulpit, founded on prophecy, that all earthly dynasties will be dissolved before the Messiah's coming. The shattering of the image in Daniel is always so understood. And the turning of the sun into darkness and the moon into blood is usually expounded as figuring the overthrow of earthly powers and aristocracies. These views are preached, published continually, and listened to without offense. The wisest interpreters predict a state of anarchy and violence before the establishment of the Kingdom. And I can not but think that if I had taken a dark view of all this instead of a bright one; if I had preached a more popular notion of the coming of Christ instead of this—that Good and Evil are struggling together, and Good disengaging itself from Evil, not without hideous birth-throes and agonies—the identical view which I preached would have been heard without the smallest opposition; or, had I confined myself to lecturing the turbulent lower classes, there would have been nothing of severity observed. But I spoke of the faults of those above me, and they complain that they should not be so taught in the presence of their servants and inferiors.

I can not help believing that—*hinc illæ lacrymæ*, my lord. I feel that, in dealing with God's truth, a minister of Christ is clear from the charge of presumption if he speaks strongly, yet affectionately, of evil or faults in his social superiors. It brings no pleasure with it. It makes him personal enemies.

It is ruin to his worldly interests; and worse than all to a sensitive heart, it makes coldness where there was cordiality. Yet through life I am ready to bear this, if need be. An earnest, searching ministry among the rich is very, very saddening work. The rest of my life will be consecrated to the poor. Forgive me, my lord, this prolixity.

If such were the feelings with which a certain number among the upper classes regarded his teaching, working-men, on the other hand, who were themselves revolutionist in feeling, and all who saw something deeper in the revolutions than a mere blind attack upon existing Governments, listened to these lectures as sincere endeavors towards a Christian solution of great problems. Many a man traces to their influence upon him his escape from the false fraternity and the false freedom of Socialism, into a higher region of thought, where a truer brotherhood and a purer liberty were conferred on him, in Christ. But not only in the pulpit, where he was necessarily shackled, did he meet these questions. A better and a more public opportunity was soon afforded him. In the beginning of the year 1848, he had visited, during a severe illness, Mr. Holtham, a member of his congregation. "I found one thought," Mr. Robertson says, "uppermost in his mind: how shall I do good to the working-classes?" Their consultations for many weeks on the subject resulted in a steady effort to establish a Working-man's Institute at Brighton. The following is an extract from a letter of Mr. Holtham:

MY DEAR SIR,— \* \* \* Some day, when you have ten minutes' leisure, I want to ask your opinion as to whether any thing can be done to awaken the minds of the working-men (as yet totally sealed) to the subject of religion.

How I wish that you had the strength of ten men, or that we had a few men like you. From such as you the working-men would learn that religion, true religion, is really comprehensible; that its dogmas are consistent with plain reason—that its teaching is in harmony with *their* consciousness of truth, justice, and generosity, and that in becoming Christians they need not cease to be men.

I am more and more impressed with the width and depth of the gulf which exists, and (as intelligence of a certain sort increases) increases between this class and the teachers of religion, and sometimes I really stand aghast and confounded at the mystery involved in it. If ever there was a voice, "not loud but deep," to reach—if ever there was a life to awaken the working-man's sympathy and affection—surely that voice, with its "Come unto me," surely that life of sacrifice and earnest tenderness were, and are, all that could be needed; and I think both of us have remarked that not only in this country, but in others perhaps more strikingly, where the working clergy have engraved more deeply than here the history of Jesus upon the hearts of the poor, there *are* traces of a love and reverence for Him, making themselves distinctly seen even in and through the collisions and distractions of life.

Surely, then, all that is wanted is the adoption of an apostolic spirit—the real teaching of Christ to the poor—of Christ, the human, yet how divine; the laboring, the loving, the exalting *Saviour of the people*.

He threw himself with courage—and it needed courage at that time, with enthusiasm; and it needed enthusiasm—into Mr. Holtham's plan. The Institute was set on foot. It was supported by the subscription of a penny a week from each of the members. More than a thousand put down their names. They cleaned, and papered, and furnished the house in which they met, with their own hands. The library was, for the most part, bought by themselves. In this way their independence was secured. But they were not too haughty to accept assistance and gifts of books from the wealthy. Thus, in accordance with one of Mr. Robertson's deepest desires, the rich and the poor were brought together, on the ground of sympathy. He was asked by the committee, which was composed solely of working-men, to open the Institute by an address. He answered in a letter, which shows that even then, scarcely a year after his arrival in Brighton, the isolation which so painfully affected his career had already begun:

I do not think I am at all the man that should be selected. They should have some one of standing and influence in the town, and I am almost a stranger; and my taking so prominent a position might fairly be construed into assumption. Again, I am much afraid that my name might do them harm rather than good. They wish not to be identified at all with party politics and party religion; and I fear that in minds of very many of the more influential inhabitants of the town my name being made conspicuous would be a suspicious circumstance. It is my conviction that an address from me would damage their cause. For though the institution is intended to be self-supporting, yet there is no reason why it should willfully throw away its chances of assistance from the richer classes, and I am quite sure that of these very many, whether reasonably or unreasonably, are prejudiced against me, and perhaps the professedly religious portion of society most strongly so. Now, I do think this is a point for very serious consideration, and I think it ought to be distinctly suggested to the committee before I can be in a position to comply with or decline complying with their request. Besides this, I believe that they have erred in their estimate of my mental calibre. I wish most earnestly, for their own sakes, that they would select a better man.

Two other letters written at this time, and bearing on the subject, are subjoined:

Last night I attended the meeting of the Working-man's Institute, and was very much struck with the genuine, manly, moral tone of the speakers. I went home with quite elevated hopes for my country when I compared the tone with that of the French clubs. And my whole heart sympathized with what your feelings must have been in the success of your brave efforts. Of course, people who expect in it a perfect Utopia will be disappointed or gratified by finding it *so far* a failure. But the similar institutions of the upper classes have been, like all human things, checkered with good and evil—a means of increasing the powers of good men for good, and those of bad men for bad. You do not expect more than this, the inevitable result of all powers and privileges added to humanity. But they *must* be added, come what

may. There is no other intelligible principle which will not be compelled, in consistency, to recognize barbarism as the highest state.

The following, written to Lady Henley, gives an account of his hopes and fears :

I am anxious to enlist your sympathy in the cause which I am trying to assist. The case is this : About 1100 working-men in this town have just organized themselves into an association, which, by a small weekly subscription, enables them to have a library and reading-room. Their proceedings hitherto have been marked by singular judgment and caution, except in one point—that they have unexpectedly applied to me to give them an opening address.

A large number of these are intelligent Chartists, and there is some mis-giving in a few minds as to what will be the result of this movement, and some suspicion of its being only a political engine.

My reasons for being anxious about this effort are these—it will be made. The working-men have as much right to a library and reading-room as the gentlemen at Folthorp's or the tradesmen at the Athenæum. The only question is, whether it shall be met warmly on our parts, or with that coldness which deepens the suspicion, already rankling in the lower classes, that their superiors are willing for them to improve so long as they themselves are allowed to have the leading-strings.

The selection of books for the library is a matter of very great importance, as I have become aware, since getting a little insight into the working of this institute, of an amount of bitterness and jealousy, and hatred of things as they are, which I had not before suspected in its full extent. And people go on saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace!"

The address was delivered on Monday, October 23, 1848. It was listened to with deep admiration and attention. It was so eloquent, the voice and manner with which it was delivered were so thrilling, the earnestness and deep belief of the speaker in all that he said were so impressive, that men said the words seemed imprinted on their characters forever. It was, moreover, a brave and noble speech, more brave and noble than can be easily understood at present. Fifteen years ago the feelings and opinions on the social relations of the upper and lower ranks of society, which are common now, were very uncommon, especially on the lips of clergymen. The "elevation of the working-classes" meant to most men at that time the destruction of the aristocracy and the monarchy: to own any sympathy with a Chartist was to acknowledge one's self a dangerous character; to speak of the wrongs of the laboring men was to initiate a revolution; to use the words, "liberty, equality, and fraternity," and to say that they had a meaning and a truth in them, was to that large class of persons to whom terms have only one meaning and truth only one side—to whom error is error and nothing more—teaching which was perilous in a politician, but almost impious in a clergyman. Supported by his

faith in truth, Mr. Robertson cared for none of these things. He taught the right, and left the seed to its own vitality. It cost him ease, and finally his life, to speak; but he would not be silent. The misunderstanding and censure which he incurred stung him acutely, but could not sting him into faithlessness to duty. He did not seek for martyrdom: few men have ever shrunk more painfully from publicity; but he steadfastly resolved to fulfill his work and to bear its cross. One class, though for a long time suspicious, received his words with joy, and hailed him as a faithful friend. The working-men of Brighton felt that at last a minister of the Church of England had entered into their aspirations and their wrongs. And because they were sympathized with as men, and neither patronized nor flattered, neither feared nor despised, they were ready to lay aside prejudice, and hear what a man of another class than their own had to say upon the subjects which were agitating them. There was not one of these subjects which he shrank from in his lecture. To omit one he would have considered cowardly; to leave one without an attempt at solving it, unworthy of a man whose business was thought; to touch upon one without bringing Christian principles to bear upon it, unworthy in a minister of Christ. The whole address may be described as an effort to destroy the errors of socialistic theories, not by denouncing them, but by holding forth the truths which lay beneath them and gave them their vitality; to show that these truths were recognized in Christianity, and placed there upon a common ground—where the various classes of society could meet and merge their differences in sympathy and love.

For this task of reconciliation he was qualified, not only by his extensive knowledge of history and political economy, but also by the many-sidedness of his views and feelings, and by the chivalry and justice of his character.

There was a kind of double nature in him. He was instinctively a Tory, but he was by conviction a Liberal. His early training at home, his reverence and his desire for a military career, cherished in him the flower of chivalrous obedience, and made him an enthusiastic royalist. "I suspect," he says, "that if the crown were ever to tyrannize, and the people were to rise, I should be found fighting against the mob, at least if, unfortunately, a queen were sovereign." He was aristocratic in feeling, in tastes, and in sensitiveness. But though his tastes were with aristocracy, his principles were with democracy. His duty to the race was stronger than his sympathy with a class. He therefore resolutely subordinated the latter to the former. He recoiled also from the

vulgarity, the loud assertiveness and obtrusiveness of the mob; but he was, on the other hand, too just not to make allowances for the want of polite training and education. By a manly suppression, then, of his ultra-sensitiveness, he soon became capable of recognizing, beneath the rough exterior of the working-men, their nobility of character. Perhaps, also, the chivalry of his nature, which would have enlisted him, like Falkland, on the side of Charles I. in the civil war because the king was unfortunate, was now enlisted on the side of the working-classes for the same reason. It was enough for one who once wished that he had been a knight of the olden time.

From all this it followed that his life became a contest between his tastes and his principles, between his sympathies and his duties. He thought himself that "this discord in him marred his usefulness." Looking at it more closely, it seems to be that very element of discord, or rather of manifoldness, in his character which made his usefulness. Feeling with and comprehending the nature of *both* sections of society, he was, on the one hand, fitted to hold the scales, to judge, and make peace between the upper and lower classes, and, on the other, prevented from being seduced by the plausibilities of Socialism, or blinded by the prejudices and fears of extreme Conservatism.

Thus the disturbances in Europe, during which the evils suffered by the working poor rose to the surface of society, did not frighten him out of his principles.

What appalls me (he says, writing in 1851) is to see the way in which persons once Liberal are now recoiling from their own principles, terrified by the state of the Continent, and saying that we must stem the tide of democracy, and support the Conservatives. Why, what has ever made democracy dangerous but Conservatism? The French Revolution! Socialism! Why, these men seem to forget that these things came out of Toryism, which forced the people into madness. What makes rivers and canals overflow—the deep channel cut ever deeper, or the dam put across by wise people to stop them?

On the other hand, he was not swept away into the alluring current of Socialism. His glance at the politics and passions of the time was calm and clear. His aristocratic tastes, his sympathy with the idea of rank, and his reverence for the past, made it impossible that he should be a Radical. And he systematically opposed Socialism on economical as well as on Christian grounds, as dangerous to the state, and as destructive of the liberty it professed to confer. The result was that, speaking at one time like a Liberal, and at another like a Conservative, he was misunderstood, and

reckoned an enemy by the extreme spirits of both parties. He saw the truth itself of the question, while they wished him only to see the half truths which they each held. He met the fate of those who are beyond their time.

He felt, however, that in the conflict in his own mind he needed some fixed ground on which to rest. Dragged aside by two extremes, he fell back on Christianity, not as a *via media*, but as declaring truths which embraced in their ample round the wisdom of Conservatism and the progressive spirit of Liberalism; which solved the questions of the day—neither by laying down laws, nor by coercive measures for oppression or for liberty, but by spreading in all classes a spirit of love, of duty, and of mutual respect. This was the ruling idea of this opening address. It was immediately published, and drew comments on it from all sections of the press. The letters to Mr. Moncrieff, which are subjoined, are an answer, apparently, to some objections made to this lecture, and fittingly begin the letters appended to this chapter:

## XVII.

9 Montpelier Terrace, Brighton, January 5, 1849.\*

MY DEAR MONCRIEFF,—It was a great pleasure to see your handwriting again after so long a silence. A few days ago, I received a *paquet* containing some Christmas lines, signed “G. R. M.” Were they yours? If so, thank you very much for them. You were more mindful than I of the claims of friendship—at least, in appearance; for, to say the truth, I was rather ashamed of my “Address,” and was very unwilling that it should be printed; as an extempore speech never should be submitted to the scrutiny of the closet in its extempore state. For this reason I did not send you a copy; but yesterday, on the receipt of your letter, I gave orders to have one forwarded to you. Now to the point of your note. I have not seen the article in the “Observer,” and very likely shall not see it. My lecture was a hasty production, and offers a mark for severe criticism in respect of many inaccuracies and more inelegancies, as it is only the short-hand report in the newspaper corrected, and corrected carelessly, for which I have no excuse but pressure of work. It has attracted more notice than it deserved, and than I expected, vituperative and laudatory; has been read by her Majesty; distributed by nobles and Quakers; sneered at by Conservatives; praised by Tories; slanged by Radicals, and swallowed, with wry faces, by Chartists. But I do not mean to notice any attacks upon it. It is very faulty; but I know that it has done good. I only wish now that I had done it in a less hasty way. If you wish to annihilate the old lady of the “Christian Observer,” I shall only say, “*Sanguine placâsti Frederick et virgine cæsa.*” For I take for granted she is an old maid, male or female. Is it not melancholy that the popular religion only represents the female element in the national mind, and that hence it is at once devotional, slanderous, timid, gossiping, narrow, shrieking, and prudish? If you make a bonfire of her, will you let me see the paper with which you light the pyre? Ever affectionately yours, F. W. R.

P.S.—I should like to have a chat with you on the marvellous events of

\* Though written in 1849, the two letters to Mr. Moncrieff belong, from their connection with the address, to the year 1848, and are therefore inserted here.

the past year. Not forgetting the Californian Pactolus, which bids fair to create many a Midas, and decorate him afterwards with ears asinine. As to Europe, I am in ecstasy :

For all the past of time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever thought hath wedded fact.

And I really can not see that the horrors and atrocities with which the right cause has been advanced ought to lead to any faithless doubt of the results, or whether it be, on the whole, the cause of God or not; or that the dungeons of the Inquisition and the robber castles of the aristocracy in former-ages proved Christianity to be infernal, or the idea of gradations in rank impracticable and diabolical. But I find myself in a minority here on that point, and excommunicated by the religious and respectable. In the midst of all which, I humbly console myself with remembering that One, before whom my spirit bows with adoration profounder in proportion as I understand Him and His infinite mind, was in His day reckoned an infidel and a latitudinarian worldling by the religious, and an anarchist whom it was fatal to the respectability of Cæsar's friend to even defend. Oh, for His sublime, brave, divine truthfulness!

## XVIII.

1849.

MY DEAR MONCRIEFF,—Thank you much for your kind letter. It is refreshing to meet with sympathy of sentiment on such matters, for the only satisfaction I get from being in a "prominent position" is that of being a good butt for rotten eggs and cabbage-stalks. Loving peace and sympathy, it is saddening to be perpetually provoking "a sword."

Now for your strictures—for which I am most grateful, and with which I—do I agree? Yes, and no.

I thought I had based distinctly my own convictions on the Bible, in a way visible to every one, as the source from whence I drew my anticipations for the future. And most unquestionably it is only from thence—that is, from Christ's life and mind expressed in His life—that my views respecting brotherhood, etc., are deduced. No doubt I am called a Radical, but my radicalism is not political, but religious—a principle, and not a scheme—a conviction of the rights of others, and I am quite sure no wish to assert my own. When I first heard the charge of radicalism, some time back, I was astounded, for I had not looked at myself in the glass for a long period, and knew not what manner of man I was. I had tried to *feel* the meaning of Christ's words, and to make my heart beat with His; and so I became what they call a Radical. Nevertheless, the Radicals and Chartists refuse to own me as a brother, and call me a rabid Tory. However, of one thing I have become distinctly conscious—that my motto for life, my whole heart's expression, is, "None but Christ;" not in the (so-called) evangelical sense, which I take to be the sickliest cant that has appeared since the Pharisees bare record to the gracious words which he spake, and then tried to cast him headlong from the hill of Nazareth; but in a deeper, real sense—the mind of Christ; to feel as He felt; to judge the world, and to estimate the world's maxims, as He judged and estimated. That is the one thing worth living for. To realize that, is to feel "none but Christ." But then, in proportion as a man does that, he is stripping himself of garment after garment, till his soul becomes naked of that which once seemed part of himself; he is not only giving up prejudice after prejudice, but also renouncing sympathy after sympathy with friends whose smile and approbation was once his life, till he begins to suspect that he will be very soon alone with Christ. More awful than I can express. To believe that, and still press on, is what I mean by the sentence, "None but



Christ." I do not know that I can express all I mean, but sometimes it is to me a sense almost insupportable of silence, and stillness, and solitariness.

I think there *is* perhaps a difference in our views of brotherhood, but in words more than in reality. I could not say that one man is not neighbor to another, except so far as they *recognize* the Father. Nor could I say that they are not brethren, except in Christ, and as recipients of his Spirit. I believe brotherhood and neighborhood to be real, *prior* to the acceptance of these truths—real, not realized, but yet to be realized as a duty. And the realization of them leads to the higher, truer union—union in Christ. The Samaritan was neighbor to the Jew by benevolence, whether the Jew recognized it or not, and whether the Samaritan was, or was not, distinctly conscious of their relation to a common Father. A man, as man, is the child of God; and one child is brother to another, whether they are conscious of their heritage relationship or not. The operatives whom I addressed were my brother men—though very possibly not my brother Christians, for a large proportion of them were infidels, and a very large number Chartists. And brotherly kindness is brotherly kindness, whether the command of Christ has been received and understood or not. I can go to a man and say, "Love your brother," without telling him that Christ commands him so to do, if I believe that he rejects the authority of Christ. But *I* feel clear and firm in my manner of saying this, because I know it is in accordance with Christ's will, though *he* does not. Christ gave the command as one not resting on arbitrary authority, but on eternal principles which are recognizable by the human heart—which ought to be recognized; and which men are morally guilty, more or less, for not recognizing on the bare statement of them.

I know that pantheism occupies this ground; and I think that pantheism is, for the most part, sentimental trash, offering no distinct ground on which to rest, but only a cloud-floor, which gives way in temptation, before the present and substantial reality of what is pleasant. Nevertheless, I am no more afraid of a truth because pantheism has unrealized it, than I am of another because revolution has caricatured it into devilry. Nay, I am rather inclined to believe it the more firmly, because I see that even the false phantom of it has had power to enchain so many human hearts. I believe in Juno's beauty all the more from Ixion's passionate admiration of a fog-likeness of her. Base coin is valued because the mint-stamped is gold. Besides, even pantheism itself has its true side. It seems to me to be the necessary reaction from the dreadful dead machinery of preceding conceptions. I think some pantheists are nearer the truth than most evangelicals. Many—most—make this world a machine, at a great distance from which a Superintendent sits, guiding and interfering, certainly, but totally disconnected in his own being and contact from the said machinery, which is in itself composed of quite base and gross materials. Now I believe that the pantheist is right in saying, there is something much more divine in God's universe than that. The life which pervades all is He in whom we live and move and have our being. The different gradations of life are more truly of the same divine essence than the hard-material distinctions of common minds make them. The life of the plant, and the life of the animals and of the intellect of man, are essentially allied to the higher life which theologically we call the divine life in the soul. And I believe that it will some day be demonstrated that the Creator is much more closely united to His own works than our unspiritual conceptions represent Him. God is a Spirit—by which most people seem to mean a subtle, ethereal gas, imponderable, perhaps, but still not only substance, but matter besides, however attenuated. Now spirit is mind; and I do not know what is meant by the locality of mind, except by saying that the universe is localized Deity, and that the universe is everywhere, and everywhere, according to both psalmist and pantheist, that which waxes old as doth a garment, folded and un-

folded as a vesture, is changed, while He, the Former, in the form remains. The Church is "the body," of which Christ is the Spirit—the fullness of Him which filleth all in all. The universe, in a sense, is the body, of which God is the Spirit—the fullness of Him which filleth all in all—a lower life, but God's life still. For this reason I do not know how to "keep language unequivocal." The two passages I have quoted from St. Paul and from the Psalms are equivocal—pantheistic in their form—indeed, I suppose one was the language of a pantheist—admitted and adopted by St. Paul in that wondrous way of his which extracted the element of truth from every thing, while rejecting the error. My statement above might come from a pantheist's lips; but I am no pantheist—I believe earnestly in God's personality—by which I mean consciousness, character, and will. Again, I could not say that to aim at the heart's excellences, without seeking the Spirit's agency, is a deep delusion and a dangerous dream. Surely, Cornelius, and men like him, did so; and the earnestness of their aim brought that very conviction of a void which opened their souls for the reception of the Spirit. Surely, in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is on his way to God, whether he have heard "if there be a Holy Ghost or not." Surely this aim at heart-excellences is the baptism of John. Can we, without unrealizing all moral convictions, lend ourselves for a moment to language which seems to say that good is not good, except it have added to it some incomprehensible element, which does not make those who boast of its possession visibly more noble and more heavenly than others, but often very much narrower and revoltingly conceited? In proportion as a man aims at excellence will he find that there is a Spirit, not himself, but eternal to himself, which he does not seek, but which seeks him—just in that proportion will he be forced to look—not in, but up and out. Be good, change your lives—repent—aim at heart-excellences—that seems to me the first thing to say and the first thing to feel. Then the doctrine of the Spirit comes not as a cut-and-dried dogma, but the interpretation in words of an external necessity of the soul.

I believe we agree; at all events, I am certain our hearts are one in God and Christ. Possibly my expressions are bad and inadequate; but in proportion as I adore Christ (and I do think my whole soul thrills and trembles at the thought of Him, when I understand, or fancy I understand Him, and feel my own heart acquiescing in His life, and views of life and God, and acknowledging them to be revelations), exactly in that proportion do I abhor that which calls itself Evangelicalism. I feel more at brotherhood with a wronged, mistaken, maddened, sinful Chartist, than I do with that religious world which has broken Popery into a hundred thousand fragments, and made every fragment an entire, new, infallible Pope—dealing out quietly and cold-bloodedly the flames of the next world upon all heretics who dispute their dictum, in compensation for the loss of the power which their ancestor, by spiritual descent, pleasingly exercised of dispensing the flames of this world. Luckily, the hope remains that they are not plenipotentiaries of the place with which they seem so familiar. More and more, day by day, one's soul feels itself alone with God, and resolved to listen for His voice alone in the deeps of the spirit.

## XIX.

February 4, 1848.

MY DEAR ACWORTH,—\*\*\* I wish you would come down here some day. We have nothing, however, to show, except the sea. In many respects Brighton has the disadvantages of Cheltenham. It is excitable, and the floating portions of society are superficial. The voluntary system, too, is detestable, and cuts the mouth like a Mameluke bit, reminding a man of his servitude at every step. And I feel the wear and tear of heart and mind in having so constantly, and in so unassisted a way, to speak on solemn sub-

jects. A man who is by profession bound to speak for present effect—for, except in the present, what can speaking do?—necessarily injures himself and his character. I do not mean in the way of popularity; for I find nothing seducing in that, and would gladly, joyously give it all up to-morrow for a calmer life; but I mean in the destruction of repose, and the inability to see any truth in its quiet beauty. All proportions are distorted, and it becomes an everlasting race between one's own mind and itself.

I have no one thing to complain of here that I had in Cheltenham, except the excitement, and that is killing. But the utter hopelessness of being listened to is past. In outward success all looks well. Consequently, I work in good spirits. But Sunday night, Monday, and all Tuesday are days of wretched exhaustion—not despondency, but actual nervous pain. I do as little as I can; indeed, I can not do less; but I begin to fear I shall never keep it up. Brighton air is wonderful; but even that fails.

## XX.

Brighton, July 11, 1848.

\* \* \* I will tell you, however, seriously, one thing which seems to me now plain. Every one is not now called upon to be a martyr for truth. It is perfectly true that whenever there is a great soul pouring out its utterances to the world, there will be a Calvary; but before we pour out our utterances, we should be quite sure that we are great souls, that the truth is one important enough to suffer for, and that the persons we speak to are worth the illumination, and not blind Pharisees, before whom Divine wisdom says, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." These three rules save from much irritation, which exhausts and does no good, like a great horse kicking at flies, every kick covering him with sweat, and enough to break twenty men's legs. But flies are not men. The convulsive kick goes through the swarm innocuous, and back they buzz and hum again. You always get the worst of it when you kick at flies. Squash them, if you can, without more effort than a switching of the tail; if not, let them alone.

## CHAPTER VI.

BRIGHTON—1849.

His Interest in all the Questions which agitated Society.—Clairvoyance and Mesmerism.—Speech at the Meeting for the "Early Closing Association."—Opposition which was roused by his Preaching.—Work, and Hidden Life.  
Letters from January, 1849, to November, 1850.

It was in 1849 that Mr. Robertson's genius was most productive and most clear. The political and social disturbances of that year and its predecessor, the ferment which kept all society bubbling with excitement, communicated their ardor and their movement to his spirit. His heart throbbed in response to the music of the march of the world, always to him a martial music. He spoke and thought best when great events encompassed him. Whatever was agitating society, he took up either in the pulpit or on the plat-

form, or in conversation with his friends. But before he gave a public opinion on any subject, he studied it with care. He did not argue blindly on the outside, but sought to attain the central point of a question, that he might see without confusion the different forms under which its idea had manifested itself; and explain, by the analogies of its past, the course of its present development. In small things as well as great this was his method. In the beginning of 1849, Alexis, the well-known clairvoyant, came to Brighton. Mr. Robertson was invited to meet him at several *séances*. He refused at first, but afterwards going, found, to his great delight, that in his presence there were no revelations. "His want of faith," said Alexis, dimmed the mesmeric vision. "My close observation," said Robertson, "confused the charlatan." He treated the matter half mirthfully, half seriously. He laughed, for he thought it a clever cheat. He frowned at the dishonor he believed to be offered by it to the calm and healthy verities of science and law. He was accustomed to mourn over the credulity which clairvoyance and its kindred induced, over the idleness they encouraged, the craving for excitement they created, and over the generation which, seeking after such signs, could not believe in the truth of Christ. The letters which follow exhibit partially these thoughts:

January, 1849.

I shall not be able to attend the *séance* to-morrow, as that old fox — objects to the presence of any one who is "wide awake." There is a very beautiful passage in Virgil's "*Æneid*," in which the ghost of Hector sadly appears to *Æneas* before the final ruin of Troy, and in a dignified way gives up all for lost. "If Troy could have been saved by mortal arm, this right hand should have saved her." \* \* \* That which the noble Trojan said of divine Troy, I now, in foiled and melancholy honesty, say of the divine senses of the celestial sex. Ah! well, it is only a specimen of what goes on in affairs more important. The Father of Lies has it all his own way in this world—in small things as well as in great; and it is a piece of absurd knight-errantry to tilt against him. I sometimes am tempted to doubt whether any one who tries to open people's eyes in science, politics, or religion, is to be reckoned as a sublime martyr or an egregious fool. The Cross, or the cap and bells? Certainly, had it not been for ONE, I should say, the cap and bells.

Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land;  
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.

Why can not sensible people see the mighty pigeon-plucking of this world without interfering? Why not let the Cagliostro's finger diamond necklaces from queens, and Alexis dupe? What is truth? The path to the pillory of ridicule. What is the champion of truths, big or little? That poor foolish sylph that interposed to save Belinda's curl, and got cut in two by a paltry pair of scissors for his pains.

Now, can you believe that I could have sat down and wept to-day? Not simply to see that foolish scene, so grave and so ridiculous, but to connect it with all the analogy of life. It made me sick at heart to think of the futility

of all attempts to tell people the whole of religious truth—to be brave, and true, and faithful. Let people go on in their old way; do not come into collision with foolish old views and superstitions! Say *out* the truths of God; and then what thanks do you get for bringing light to people who love darkness? which nine hundred and ninety-nine in the thousand do.

I think the best work that Signor R— could consult would be Turton's "Reply to Dr. Wiseman on the Eucharist." It seems to me, however, that the surest way of arriving at correct views of this matter is to endeavor to enter into the mind of Christ, His tone of feeling, and the scope of His grand life. Transubstantiation then gradually withers from the conception as a contradiction to Christianity, which is a Spirit and a Life. To localize it; to tie it in any way to the material; to bind it to "days and months, and times and years;" to make it "meat and drink;" to prevent its getting beyond the rudiments—that is, "the alphabet of the world;" to make it "subject to ordinances;" to make it any thing but the worship of a spirit—God in spirit and in truth—is to go back to Judaism.

But I do not wonder at the belief in Transubstantiation; it only assumes the *fact* of a miracle, very possible in itself—a religious mistake, though a great one. But I do marvel at grown men believing in clairvoyance, and then refusing to listen to the argument for Transubstantiation. I met the other day a lady, thoughtful, independent, and candid, thoroughly inartificial and free from prejudice, who was completely converted into a devotee of the superstition of 1849. After which, I can comprehend that Transubstantiation should have been undoubted for a thousand years, annihilated at the end of that time, resuscitated, and that it should have in it a fair prospect of leading a vigorous existence of, say, another thousand of years.

The next subject which engrossed him, and which brought him prominently before the public, was the closing of shops in Brighton at an earlier hour than was customary. A meeting was called on April 24, 1849, by the Early Closing Association, and he was asked to speak. His speech was remarkable for its grasp of both sides of the question. He thought well of the plan proposed, but for that very reason was calm and sober in his tone, and determined to look in the face all the difficulties which environed the subject. He stood between the masters and the young men. He claimed for the former freedom from coercion; he even spoke of the peculiar difficulties they would have in carrying out the views of the Association, owing to the number of strangers who came into Brighton at a late hour. He claimed for the latter their right, as men, to time for self-improvement, but he demanded that their leisure should be well employed. Then, with one of his rapid turns of thought, he showed to his audience of the higher classes that it was not only those who sold, but those who bought, in whose hands the question lay.

It was a noble speech, full of economical knowledge, sober arguments, and wise prevision of difficulties. It is curious to find so imaginative and excitable a man keeping so steadily in the path of common sense. He pleased neither party:

one thought his words too bold, the other thought them too lukewarm; but though his speech won few cheers, it made its impression afterwards, when the passions of men had cooled down to the reasoning-point.

During the rest of the year he made no public address, except from the pulpit, but from that place his influence radiated every day more powerfully. His chapel became crowded to the doors. His sermons grew more weighty and more eloquent. The two confirmation-lectures preached this year, on Jacob's Wrestling and the Parable of the Sower, display the opulence of thought and care which he spent on the education of the young. It will be seen, however, from a letter written to answer some objections made to his analysis of the despair and suicide of Judas, and subjoined to this chapter, that, side by side with his influence, the opposition to his ministry increased and became more harassing. "It is only too true," he says, "that the perpetual chafings and work of a place like Brighton have destroyed all claim to philosophic clearness, and that I am getting less fit for study and mental tension." The officious support of some who got up addresses to him, and subscriptions for his portrait, and the vulgarizing efforts of others who did the same on mercenary grounds, drew him into a prominence which pained him.

My enemies (he writes), not content with the usual modes open to snarlers, actually invade me in my castle; and on the strength of being religious, come with long faces, though perfect strangers, to warn me of the wrath in store for me hereafter if I do not repent of my manifold heresies. So you see I am in a hornet's nest, and buffets only exhaust strength in vain, the amount of real good done being very problematical.

To hide himself from this public shadow of himself, he gave himself up to quiet and continuous work. He held a weekly lecture in his vestry for the poor; he visited among them; he endeavored to draw around him the young men of Brighton belonging to that class which is so rarely touched by clergymen—the shop-keepers' assistants, the clerks; all those, in fact, whom his speech on the question of Early Closing had partially, by its sobriety, alienated from him. He shrank more and more into a hidden way of life, refused to publish his sermons, and kept, as much as possible, apart from society. In a letter written to his mother, at the close of the year, he speaks of some unauthorized publication of one of his Advent lectures:

The miserable publication of "St. Paul's Novitiate," as the printer calls it, was a libel—absurd, curtailed, and in some places absolutely false. Pray—pray let it be known that all these things are more or less misrepresenta-

tions, and done entirely without my sanction! It is of great importance that they should not appear, for I have abundance of slanderers—I can not tell why, for I molest no one, abstain now even from public lectures, go out very little, and only ask to be left alone. I take no pains to contradict innumerable falsehoods, for it would be endless. I take my own path quietly, and never retaliate.

In the October of this year there began a long and voluminous correspondence with several persons, which has, most fortunately, been preserved. It will appear in its proper place. Meanwhile, the letters which follow include all that can be known of the history of his life during the first nine months of 1849:

## XXI.

1849.

MY DEAR —, —I ought long ago to have replied to your kind request for a reply to the objections brought against my sermon on Acts i., but I have always felt a defense of my own views peculiarly irksome, as I am glad to escape the unprogressive task of circling round any thing which I have ever said or written.

I will briefly give you the replies which refute the charges of your friend's note.

First of all: my "desire to be original, and going astray from the old paths."

Whether I aim at an appearance of originality or not, God must judge, who alone has the right to scrutinize motives and impute them. As to originality, things which are very familiar to those whose reading is professional and varied, may appear new to those who chiefly seek the teaching and read the works of one school of theology. "Old paths" require to be defined. That which is old now was new once, and treated with very great bitterness at first, as all new forms of truth are sure to be. Evangelicalism was called new-fangled fifty years ago. I presume that no one would maintain that the popular preaching of the present day is in the old paths, either of thought or phraseology, in which Jeremy Taylor or Bishop Andrews walked; or that they were not liable to the charge of novelty in their day, compared with the tone of thought and teaching prevalent in St. Bernard's; or that Bernard's preaching was not very, very different from that of Chrysostom's day. Nay, more—the Apostles—He himself—what was the charge against them, but that they did not walk in the old paths, but taught "new doctrines?" Evangelicalism itself, worn threadbare as it is by trite thought—and certainly, to do it justice, guiltless of mental power or fresh thought, for the last ten years at least—what was it called in the days of Cecil and Scott? The "good old" High-Church talked loudly of new lights.

I am said to have "apologized for Judas," thereby falling into one of the various old exploded errors of heterodox teachers, "to which my desire of seeming original guides me."

My "apology" for Judas consisted in saying that his sin was not murder, but unbelief, and that he was sincere in what he did; also that his temptation was Satanic, and that he is in hell.

I do not fancy that Judas would thank me much for my apology. We will examine this heterodox defense.

What I said was, in effect, this: The essential guilt of suicide is unbelief—that is, despair of God's love and goodness. Distrust is the sin of sins, which makes sin sin. Luther said strongly, but not too strongly, "Nothing damns except unbelief." My sermon, therefore, charged Judas with unbelief, final

and desperate. I do not know what your correspondent thinks of the sinfulness of unbelief; but it is clear that he is very much shocked at a charge of murder being converted into one which only imputes unbelief: *only* unbelief!

I may, perhaps, add that the question, as to what is the essential guilt of suicide, is settled by the reply of Christ when the evil suggestion was presented to Him. He did not allege the Sixth Commandment, which he assuredly would have done had suicide been murder; but, "Thou shalt not tempt" (*i. e.*, try, make experiment of) "the Lord thy God." He treated it as a temptation, not to murder, but to distrust; which was exactly what I did, on His infallible authority.

I shall briefly dispose of the remaining objections.

Your correspondent is scandalized by the expression that Judas was sincere, and says, with a note of admiration, "the sincerity of Judas, who betrayed his Master, bare the bag," etc.

I did not say that Judas was sincere in his betrayal of Christ, nor in his stewardship of the common purse—I did not say that he was a sincere man. I simply said, he was sincere in his remorse. A thief may behave honestly sometimes. The unjust steward was commended by his lord. Yet I have heard of commentators of the Rationalistic school who were as much offended with the Bible as your friend is with me, because it commends a man who had tampered with his master's accounts. The Bible, however, commends him; and Christ puts him forth as a pattern to Christians, not because he had acted honestly in all cases, but because he had done wisely in one. He who commended him as wise in that act did not exactly say that his waste and duplicity were objects of admiration. And if I assert that Judas was sincere in his remorse, it requires some ingenuity to pervert this into an opinion that he was sincere in his kissing his Redeemer. The suicide of Judas *was* the act of a man sincere, even to agony, in his remorse. Did he *pretend* to cast down the gold? Did he *pretend* the pangs which drove him to despair? I say, further, all suicide is sincere. I stated that for the express purpose of showing that sincerity does not make the matter better, and that remorse is not penitence. Your correspondent, without having heard the sermon, hears of a detached expression, and *charitably* assumes that it was part of the "apology" for Judas. It formed, in fact, part of the demolition of a supposed apology that might be made for him.

Again: "Where does Scripture speak of Judas not working out his destiny, by which he was as truly destined to salvation as any other of the apostles, but that his destiny crushed him?"

I reply: Every one has a mission in this world to accomplish. That is the destiny given him to work out. Judas had such a mission. God had appointed him to salvation by His call as truly as the other apostles, unless we are prepared to believe that the Eternal Love predestines to sin. He had a "ministry and apostleship from which he by transgression fell." Judas was sent into the world to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. God "did not will the sinner's death." Surely, surely the Bible is plain enough on that point. But Judas would not accept his mission, and then that which was given in blessing turned to curse. His destiny crushed him; he went to his *own* place, the place he had prepared for himself, not the place prepared by God. So it is with you and me. No decree of God has insured our misery. All things work together for good to those who love God. But the same things work together for evil if they do not love God. The sailor who yields to and works with the winds of God is brought by them to the haven where he would be; but if he try to beat up against them, the very gale that was carrying him to safety overwhelms him; he is crushed by the very destiny that was working out his salvation. All I said



on this point was simply expository of the sentence, "He went to his own place."

I think you told me there was a feeling of condemnation for the use of the word *courage* in connection with the act of Judas. Suicide implies physical courage. There is a higher courage, which I distinctly contrasted with this animal daring, which enables a man quietly and bravely to endure the weariness of this heavy life, obloquy, and hatred. He who has that is safe, as I then said, from suicide; and it was to contrast it with this that I admitted the other courage which belongs to the suicide.

And to deny this is surely absurd. I do not reckon physical courage very high; but still I do not think there are many gentlemen in Brighton who are men enough to stab themselves, if all religion were out of the question. If it seem a very easy thing to inflict a deathblow on self, perhaps they might come to some conclusion on the point, if they will only try to bind up their own arms, and use the lancet next time it is wanted. This objection is so weak, that I can scarcely speak of it with gravity.

Lastly, your friend asks, "When does Scripture mention the least impatience or any sin in the man Christ Jesus?" and then goes on to speak, with great horror, of my "awful notion" of admitting the germ of evil, etc., in Him.

I presume this is a misconception of an expression which I have more than once used. Specially dwelling on the Redeemer's sinlessness, I have shown how all the innocent feelings of our nature were in Him, but stopped on the verge which separates the innocent from the wrong. An inclination of human nature is not wrong—hunger, anger—but being gratified unduly, or in forbidden circumstances, it passes into sin. "Be ye angry, and sin not." Legitimate anger was to stop short of sinful vindictiveness.

Similarly, our Lord felt the weariness of life, and was anxious to have it done, amidst perpetual opposition of enemies and misconception of friends. "How am I straitened till it be accomplished?" "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?"

There was no germ of sin in Christ; for sin is the acting of an evil will. Sin resides in the will, not in the natural appetites. There was no germ of sin in Him; but there were germs of feeling, natural and innocent, which show that He was in all points tempted like as we are.

If I say to a man who is angrily calling Mr. Smith O'Brien a felon, "You mistake; it is not felony, but treason, he is guilty of," I have not defended the poor man much by saying he is a traitor instead of a felon—I have simply vindicated the right use of words. If I say Judas's guilt was not murder, but final and fatal despair, and call it, as I remember well I did, the sin of sins, it is somewhat difficult to make me out as an apologist for suicide.

So much for the apology of Judas.

Certainly there is an exploded heterodox defense of him with which I am acquainted. It was held that not from avarice, but from a desire to force on the acknowledgment of his Master's mission, he betrayed Him. Your correspondent seems to fancy I have adopted this. Mr. M'Neile, no oracle of mine, but a very good man, and high in the Evangelical world, adopted it, and printed the sermon; but his orthodoxy remains unimpeached: nor has he been accused, so far as I know, of affecting novelty, absurd as the view is. But this is the happy fate of all party-men.

Further, however, I said that Judas went to his own place—a very emphatic expression. I said the soul gravitated downwards. The sin which led to suicide led to hell; but it was his own place, in the way of natural retribution, not of arbitrary reprobation. This was another feature in the apology for Judas. I left him in hell. What more would they have? Only an unbeliever!—only in hell!

Now, with regard to the propriety of the assertion that the sin was despair, not murder—

Your correspondent says, "Where does Scripture draw a distinction between killing and murder?" The only reason in Scripture for the heinousness of the crime is *not* that it involves hatred and malice, but that "in the image of God created He man."

All through the Book of Leviticus a distinction is drawn between killing and murder—all through the Bible. To kill is to take away life; to murder is to kill with malice prepense. The soldier kills, so does the executioner, so does the man who acts under sudden and dreadful provocation, so does the man who acts in self-defense, so does the duellist, so does the man who treasures up a wrong for years. In every one of these the image of God, wherein He made man, is destroyed. Is there no distinction between them? They are all killing; are they all murder? Is it just to brand the guilt of a man, or rather the act of a man, who shoots a footpad demanding his purse with menaces, with the same name as is appropriated to the act of Rush? You may get one rude generic name, like murder, to include a vast number of offenses, just as the generic name Animal includes man and zoophytes, with endless intermediate gradations. But it is only a very rude way of talking. And a man scarcely differs from a zoophyte more than the suicide, which has no hatred in it and no malice, does from the murder, which is one of revenge. It is only loosely that we call suicide self-murder; well enough for popular conversation, but utterly unfit for the expression of accurate thought.

All this comes from the loose way in which people think of sin, and the unmeaning way in which they, therefore, talk of the sinlessness of the man Christ Jesus. They forget that He *suffered* being tempted. In point of fact, they deny, without intending it, all that makes His sinlessness sublime and real. They reduce that glorious Heart to a mere machine, and make His life a theatrical exhibition, in which factitious struggles and sorrows went on. He only *pretended* to struggle with temptation! It really would appear, according to them, that he did not actually *suffer* in putting down the inclination which arose spontaneously and innocently.

However, this is a very large subject, and I can not go into it.

The insinuation of "German neology" is a comprehensive and very convenient charge by which all earnest thought is tabooed at the present day. It is quite enough to hint that it is German. So at the time of the Reformation they spoke of Greek and Hebrew. "Greek," said a Roman Catholic priest, "is a new language just discovered, and full of heresies. As for the Hebrew language, all who study that become Jews immediately." So they speak of German now. Englishmen seem to think that the Redeemer died exclusively for them, and that light shines nowhere but here. Sixty millions of God's creatures speak German, and can only get their theology in that. Alas! for those who have not the English theology, though it be, unfortunately, only a feeble echo of that which, in its freshness, came from Germany three hundred years ago. "Verily, we English are the men; and truth shall die with us." But the singular part of this charge is, that they who make it know so little of the matter, that, like your correspondent, they are not even aware that the present heterodoxy of Germany is not neologian, and that neologianism is exploded even there. To them, neology, rationalism, mysticism, mythicism, pantheism, all mean pretty much the same thing; and one charge is nearly as good as another, because all are vague and mysterious, like the venerable fee-fi-fo-fum of our childhood.

To live by trust in God—to do and say the right because it is lovely—to dare to gaze on the splendor of the naked truth, without putting a false veil before it to terrify children and old women by mystery and vagueness—to live by love, and not by fear—that is the life of a true, brave man, who will take

Christ and His mind for the Truth, instead of the clamor of either the worldly world or the religious world; between which two, alas! there is as little difference now as in the days of Pharisaism; or rather, if there be any difference, we know who said that the "world" of sinners was, as knowing its blindness, rather in the less danger of the two.

The chief difference between the two views of suicide is this: the one says Hell, and something worse, if you dare to murder yourself. I would rather say, trust God, and believe in Him as Love, and suicide is impossible. If the other argument were the only thing that could save us from fifty suicides a day, I would not use it; for the goodness which is only produced by fear is no goodness at all. I quite agree, with every fibre of my heart responding, with the sentiment of that noble thinker, Milton: "Were I the chooser, a dram of well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil-doing. For God, sure, esteems the growth and completion of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious."

I believe that the great lesson for us to learn—every day it seems more true to me—is this: God and my own soul; there is nothing else in this world I will trust to for the truth. To those alone we are amenable for judgment—to Him and to His voice within us. From all else we must appeal. Only we must not appeal so haughtily as we are sometimes tempted to do—as, perhaps, I have done on this present occasion—in independence, but not in pride.

## XXII.

9 Montpelier Terrace, Brighton, March 29, 1849.

MY DEAR —,—I will most willingly comply with your request, difficult as it is; for how difficult to express another's feelings! and besides, in a public inscription, as little of private feeling as can be profaned, the better. But will you tell me a little more precisely what you wish? You use the word poet. Do you wish a prose or a verse inscription? For your sake, or your sister's, I would do either; but I think the latter would certainly prove a failure; and is it desirable?

I have never spoken or written a syllable to you about our dear lost William, because I can not. Every year I feel less inclined than I once was to get upon subjects of the deepest interest. Every year I feel that utterance profanes feeling, and makes it commonplace. He is gone—with all his fresh, bright, marvellous flow of happiness. What is there more to be said than is contained in those dreadful words—He is gone? How often I have thought of the evening he left Tours, when, in our boyish friendship, we set our little silver watches exactly together, and made a compact to look at the moon exactly at the same moment that night, and think of each other! I do not remember a single hour in life since then which I would have arrested, and said, Let this stay. And to William all was so bright and hopeful! Only now and then, the shadow projected by the more solemn and sombre aspect of the Future seemed to rest upon his heart—even that was transient. I have sympathized with you often in secret, dear —; but for him, I see nothing in his lot that is not a subject for envy. Why should we wish him to have remained a little longer?—to have been slashed or mangled in obedience to the orders of some \* \* \* and then to be lost among the names of the innumerable gallant hearts that are made clay of to satisfy the cupidity of East India merchants? Oh no! better, surely, as it is. And as to the eternal question. We know of him—what is all that we can ever know of any one removed beyond the veil which shelters the unseen from the prying of curiosity—that he is in the hands of the Wise and Loving. Spirit has mingled with spirit. A child, more or less erring, has gone home. Unloved by his Father? Believe it who may, that will not I.

## XXIII.

February 22, 1849.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I send you the volume of Wordsworth, which you forgot last night. One must not be too young, either in heart or years, to lie entirely open to his influence.

I fancy character may be measured, both in depth and quality, by the poet who is the chosen favorite. He is a kind of *Nilometer* to mark the depth at different distances on the river. A man's *Nilometer*, in the higher regions, may be Shelley. The wild and marvellous stream is then still in the air region, finding a home among clouds, cutting a narrow way through clefts of rock, flowing for many hundred yards together under frozen patches of snow—a strange and beautiful life in the waste of the eternal silence, issuing out clear and pure and cold a little higher up, from the delicately blue cavern of the glacier. Even in its lower and earthier flow, the stream will appear to hold mysterious connection, as if by invisible sympathy, with its source, and even the inarticulate murmurs of its daily ripples will seem but the cadences which ought to be heard only in those still and solemn realms.

Down in the plains, in the less unearthly part of its course, the watermark of such a man will stand at Burns. A strong, swift flow, so deep as to scarcely seem to move on the surface; somewhat turbid, but the very earth which discolors it will often be purer than the snow which falls into other rivers direct from the cloud of heaven.

Between these two regions of such a man's life, Wordsworth will mark the height and temperature of the stream in a part of its course which will be at present invisible—being lost, as is the case with some rivers, for many miles underground. But when this lost power of life shall reappear, Wordsworth will only mark the depth and temperature near the banks. The central depths he will not be able to sound.

## XXIV.

February 26.

I have been reading the sermon or essay I sent you, to find in it some clue to the tone of your note, and in vain—in vain, at least, so far as a legitimate clue is concerned. For surely you have misinterpreted its meaning if you think it says that the spirit of Humanity is to be stilled into silence, that the diviner impulses may start to their supremacy? We do not reach spirituality of character by spasmodic, unnatural efforts to crush the nature that is within us, but by slow and patient care to develop and disengage it from its evil. It is not angelic, but human excellence at which we are to aim; nor can we “be perfect as our Father is perfect” except in our degree. “Every man in his own order.” To become saints, we must not cease to be men and women.

For man is not as God,  
But then most Godlike, being most a man.

And if there be any part of our nature which is essentially human, and to effect the excision of which would destroy its humanity, it is the craving for sympathy. The Perfect One gave sympathy and wanted it. Gave it, as every page will show; wanted it—“Could ye not watch with me one hour?” “Will ye also go away?” “Simon, the son of Jonas, lovest thou me?” Found it, surely, even though his brethren believed not in him—found it in John, and Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus.

Though some of the following letters belong to 1850, it has been considered better, for an obvious reason, to throw them all together:

## XXV.

October, 1849.

I do not read the Fathers now. I know their system pretty well, I believe, from having examined with great interest their advocates' and their opponents' writings; and I am sensible of the healing effect produced by such a system on the mind of those who accept it. Nay, I even know that their errors are but forms of truth which lie beneath them; false forms, which yet convey spiritual truth to those who do not know or suspect the falsehood of the form. The misfortune is, that I am certain they are false—as false as Romanism—though even in that system mariolatry and purgatory are material and gross statements of spiritual facts, which I think our systems neglect. But then I can not by an act of volition receive a system for the sake of the comfort which I know to be to me a lie. It is at my peril that I thus falsify my inmost nature, and consent to be deluded by a figment. To those to whom it is not a lie, I do not dispute—nay, I cordially, and, I hope, charitably, believe—that the system may be elevating, purifying, life-giving; but I had rather stand alone in a waste, howling wilderness, tempted by Satan, and conscious of having stripped myself of all unreality, than accept the happiest consolation that the more inhabited world could give me.

## XXVI.

May, 1850.

Do you believe in God? Dare you not trust yourself like a child to Him? Oh, what is your baptism worth, if it has not taught you that blessed central truth of all—that He is your Father? Dare you so stifle His voice in your soul, which comes in the simple rushings of earnest thought, and then call it conscience? Are you sure that you may not be shutting out a ray from heaven, although you fear that it is a meteor from hell? \*\*\* I tried no arguments against Romanism, for I feel that Romanism is only an infinitely small and sensualistic embodiment of truths—a living human form shrunk into a mummy—with every feature there hideously like life, especially when it, by force applied from without, by wires or galvanism, moves humanly. \*\*\* God made the soul to correspond with truth. Truth is its own evidence, as the lightning-flash is, as the blessed sunlight is. \*\*\* Alas! alas! you do not believe that you have a soul—you do not believe in God—you do not believe that His spirit can find your soul—you believe in the dial, and not in the sun—you dare not be alone with Christ—you do not feel the solitary yet humbling grandeur of being in His vast universe alone as He was, with your Father. His life is not the pattern of your life, and His divine humanity is not the interpretation of the mysteries of your solitary being. You can not walk the valley of the shadow of death fearlessly, as David did, because "Thou art with me." You must have a crowd of — and a number of other good men by some hundred thousands to assure you that you are not alone. All this universe is God's blessed sacrament, the channel of His Spirit to your soul, whereof He has selected two things as types of all the rest: the commonest of all elements, water, and the commonest of all meals, a supper, and you can not find Him except in seven! Too many, or else too few; but even in that protest against the Protestant limitation of grace to two channels I recognize a truth, only distorted and petrified as usual.

Oh, be brave and wait! These are dark days—lonely days—and our unbelieving impatience can not bear to wait, but must rashly, and by impetuous steps of our own, plunge after the *ignis fatuus* of light. Peace at once! Light at once! I can not wait my time, and I will not! I do not say all this as one who is utterly unable to comprehend "the delusion of people who can not be content with the sound and excellent principles of our incompar-

able Liturgy." I only comprehend too well the struggles and the agonies of a soul that craves light and can not find it. And as to our "incomparable Church," why it does not require a prophetic spirit to see that in ten years more she must be in fragments, out of which fragments God will reconstruct something for which I am content to wait, in accordance with His usual plan, which is to be forever evolving fresh forms of life out of dissolution and decay. If not in my time, why then still I wait. I am alone now, and shall be till I die; and I am not afraid to be alone in the majesty of darkness which His presence peoples with a crowd. I ask now no sympathy but His. If He should vouchsafe to give me more, I shall accept it gratefully; but I am content to do without it, as many of His best and bravest must do now.

Why can not you live with Him? \* \* \*

I have no superstitious evangelical horror of Romanism, but— Alas! alas! for the substitution of an artificial, *created* conscience for the sound and healthy one of humanity, whose tides are distinct and unmistakable in their noble music, like those of nature's ocean in its irresistible swell!

## XXVII.

November 25, 1850.

Till to-day I did not know of your loss, which, it seems, is now no longer a fresh grief, so swiftly does time pass. No; God and time are the only cures for sorrow, and they do cure. I feel that the blest are the dead. To live is unvaried trial. \* \* \* Your last letter seemed to breathe a misgiving about the constancy of my trust and friendship, in consequence of your change. You need not doubt; I wish you had taken a more daring, braver, and truthful course. I wish you had dared to live alone with God for a few years. I believe that you will not find peace long in Rome. But the fact of your being there does not alter my feeling towards you in one iota. Beneath, far beneath all forms of the sight and feeling, I joyfully recognize the unity of that spirit which forms the basis of all true lives. At bottom we mean—all good minds mean—substantially the same thing; and I look forward more and more yearningly to the day when we shall see this, as well as take it for granted. For yourself I am in less apprehension; for I know that if you are spared, you will not die a member of the Church of Rome.\*

## XXVIII.

I am where I was, gathering fresh accretions round the nucleus of truth; I hold surer every day that my soul and God seek each other, and am utterly fearless of the issue. I am but "an infant crying in the dark, and with no language but a cry;" nevertheless I am not afraid of the dark. It is the grand, awful mystery! but God is in it, the light of the darkest night.

I am alone, lonelier than ever—sympathized with by none, because I sympathize too much with all. But the All sympathizes with me. I have almost done with divinity—dogmatic divinity, that is—except to lovingly endeavor to make out the truth which lies beneath this or that poor dogma, miserably overlaid as marble fonts are with whitewash. \* \* \*

I read Shakspeare, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Coleridge, Philip Van Artevelde, for views of man to meditate upon, instead of theological caricatures of humanity; and I go out into the country to *feel* God; dabble in chemistry, to feel awe of Him; read the life of Christ, to understand, love, and adore Him; and my experience is closing into this, that I turn with disgust from every thing to Christ. I think I get glimpses into His mind, and I am sure that I love Him more and more. \* \* \* A sublime feeling of a Presence comes upon me at times, which makes inward solitariness a trifle to talk about.

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\* A prediction subsequently verified.

## CHAPTER VII.

Letters of Mr. Robertson.—Complexity of his Character.—His Sensitiveness.—His Knowledge of Men.—His Life in Society.—Effect of Climate upon him.—Exquisite Perception of Natural Scenery.—Impressions received from Art, and how he used them.—Appreciation of Poetry.—Intensity of Enthusiasm and of Indignation.—His Eloquence and its Characteristics.—Hatred of the Reputation of a "Popular Preacher."—The natural Morbidity and the dangerous Tendencies of his Character.—The Means he employed to conquer them.—His noble Truth and Self-devotion.—Causes of the Gloom which appears in his Letters.  
Letters, August and September, 1849.

It was in this year, 1849, that Mr. Robertson became the constant correspondent of several persons. From henceforth the account of his outward and his inward life is so largely given by himself, that a biographer has fortunately but little to say. But the letters and extracts of letters need in some sort a preface, for many of them are so peculiar, and even startling, from their extremely passionate expressions and morbid excitement, that doubts have been entertained as to the advisability of publishing them. But if they had been kept back, so much of the real essence of the man, so much of that which was most distinctive in him, would be left undisclosed, that no *true* conception of his character and of his genius would be possible. The extreme complexity of that character, a complexity which naturally accompanied its great powers, will always render it liable to be mistaken. Apparent contradictions, apparent inconsistencies, strange minglings of strength and weakness, continually arise before us, as we read his letters. It would be possible to give to the world a picture of him the harmonies of whose colors would be easily seen by all; but it would not be a true picture. The picture painted in these letters is difficult to comprehend, and the harmonies of its colors are subtly and perplexedly involved. Many will not understand it, and, not understanding, will misrepresent it; but to those who can find the key, it will be as varied and interesting as it is full of suggestive teaching.

The root of all that was peculiar in Mr. Robertson's character and correspondence lay in the intense sensitiveness which pervaded his whole nature. His senses, his passions, his imagination, his conscience, his spirit, were so delicately wrought, that they thrilled and vibrated to the slightest touch. His great power of sympathy arose out of this sensitiveness.

My misfortune or happiness (he says) is power of sympathy. I can feel with the Brahmin, the Pantheist, the Stoic, the Platonist, the Transcendentalist, perhaps the Epicurean. At least, I feel the side of Utilitarianism which seems like truth, though I have more antipathy to it than any thing else. I can suffer with the Tractarian, tenderly shrinking from the gulf blackening before him, as a frightened child runs back to its mother from the dark, afraid to be alone in the fearful loneliness; and I can also agonize with the infidels, recoiling from the cowardice and false rest of superstition. Many men can feel each of these separately, and they are happy. They go on straightforward, like a one-eyed horse, seeing all clear on one side. But I feel them all at once, and so far I am *allseitig, ein ganzer Mann*. But I am not such in this sense, that I can harmonize them all; I can only feel them. For this greatness there must be an all-feeling heart, together with an all-seeing eye. This world and its inner music is like a perfect band. Each instrument, alone, is harsh, incomplete; all together are harmony. The world is a full concert; he who hears only one tone, hears imperfectly; he who hears all separately, hears out of tune, discordantly, and confusedly; he only understands the universe who can hear all or most at once. So also with sight. To a perfect vision the impression on two retinas is felt as only one.

Yet there is comfort in this thought. To feel all separately is one step towards feeling all harmoniously. So a town begun in different parts, as Munich, is painful to look at. In years or centuries it will form one whole. Or a country whose railway plans are only partially executed is unpleasant to journey over, for you are perpetually interrupted in your travels. Yet the time is coming when it shall be a perfect network, and every detached bit shall help to connect the rest, and communication with every part shall be had. So I feel as much as I can. I will get every kind of *Bewusstsein*. They will harmonize at last.

His knowledge of men was also due to his sensitive sympathy. He seemed to feel by it as if by a sixth sense, the character of those with whom he came into contact. It was not through knowledge of the world, nor through reasoning on the actions of men, that he recognized what they were. He felt them. Hence he had a very strange and great power. He almost always felt in the presence of others, not his own feelings, but theirs. He identified himself with them for a time. He was thus enabled to reveal men to themselves, to tell them what their life meant, and how to idealize it and to ennoble it; to draw out in them what was best and highest; and all this with a gracious tact, due also to his sensitiveness, which seldom did too little and never went too far. Thus he had pre-eminently the gift of governing the hearts of men; and it is high and deserved praise to say of him, that the two great dangers which beset this gift, the danger lest the power of governing should be degraded into the lust of dominion—the danger lest the desire of retaining that power should end in truckling to men, or in suppression of the truth through fear of giving offense—were always by him avoided and abhorred.

His sensitiveness followed him into society, and constituted



his pleasure and his pain. He was easily jarred ; but when in tune with those around him, when in the company of those he loved and trusted, the harmony of his nature imparted itself to all around him. In his happier moods he was as radiant as a child : he joined with a fascinating cheerfulness in the games and merriment of young people ; it seemed a relief to him to throw off with them the whole burden of life, and to forget the sorrow and disappointment with which his career was beset. His whole being blossomed under the sunshine of love and comprehension : in such society he diffused peace, and drew out from each all that was best and purest ; but where he felt that he was suspected and misunderstood, he would often sit silent for the whole evening.

The aspect of outward nature, which was society to him, affected him in a like manner. He basked and seemed to live more vividly in broad sunshine. On the other hand, when his nervousness had increased from the pressure of disease, it made all the difference between rapidity of thought, ease of arrangement of his subject, and laborious failure, whether he wrote in a room which faced to the south or north. At that time, and in a lesser degree always, a gloomy day influenced him like a misfortune, and an ugly, inharmonious color brought on nervous irritation.

He had, therefore, an exquisite perception of natural scenery. Those who have heard his sermons will remember how often and delightedly he spoke of the sunsets at Brighton : not indulging in vague description, but, with the artist's power of seeing, italicizing, as it were, the essential and characteristic points of form and color in the clouds and sky. His wanderings in the Tyrol and Switzerland were never forgotten. Certain scenes especially seem to have been engraved upon his memory. There is a vivid description of one of these in one of his lectures upon poetry which is worth quoting :

I wish I could describe one scene which is passing before my memory at this moment, when I found myself alone in a solitary valley in the Alps, without a guide, and a thunder-storm coming on ; I wish I could explain how every circumstance combined to produce the same feeling, and ministered to unity of impression : the slow, wild wreathing of the vapor round the peaks, concealing their summits, and imparting in semblance their own motion, till each dark mountain-form seemed to be mysterious and alive ; the eagle-like plunge of the lammergeier, the bearded vulture of the Alps ; the rising of the flock of choughs, which I had surprised at their feast on carrion, with their red beaks and legs, and their wild, shrill cries startling the solitude and silence, till the blue lightning streamed at last, and the shattering thunders crashed as if the mountains must give way. And then came the feelings which in their fullness man can feel but once in life : mingled sensations of awe and triumph, and defiance of danger—pride, rapture, contempt

of pain, humbleness, and intense repose, as if all the strife and struggle of the elements were only uttering the unrest of man's bosom; so that in all such scenes there is a feeling of relief, and he is tempted to cry out exultingly, There! there! All this was in my heart, and it was never said out until now.

Here the accurate delineation of the outward scene and the immediate combination of it with the mental analogue to it in his own mind, are peculiarly characteristic of his genius. He moralized nature, not willfully, but unconsciously. Phenomena lay in his brain as pictures upon sensitive paper, till thought seized on them as illustrations; and in proportion to the vividness with which the impression had been received, was the clearness and concinnity of the thought and its illustration. Nothing can be better, *e. g.*, than the comparison of the invisible Church existing in the idea of God, and the visible Church mixed with human infirmity and sin, to the Rhone as it issues purple and clear from the Lake of Geneva, and the same river discolored after its junction with the Arve.

The same sensitiveness regulated the effect of art upon him. He had no ear for music; but, in certain states of feeling, beautiful sound—only as beautiful sound, not as scientific music—made his mind creative, and lingered so upon his ear that he could not sleep at night. His love of paintings and sculpture arose not so much from the education of the connoisseur as from the feelings they awakened. He allowed a picture to produce its influence upon him, without, at least at first, an active exercise of his own mind upon the picture. His was the “wise passiveness” which allowed the spirit of the work to have its own way with him before he began to criticise. Two illustrations of this will be found in his lectures on poetry: one, a Madonna at Blenheim, which he “could not gaze upon without being conscious of a calming influence;” the other, a print of a dying camel in the desert, anticipating in despair its doom from the vultures. “You can not look at the print,” he says, “without a vivid sense and conception of despair. You go through street after street before the impression ceases to haunt you.”

The impressions thus received he retained. He had not, on their reception, “hooked them to some useful end,” and so destroyed their freshness and universality. Afterwards they came in naturally and freely, as illustrations of ideas and assistance to thought, and, as was often the case, in different connections and with different meanings. In art, as in other things, he grasped the spirit and scorned the letter. Hence there was a freedom of usage possible to him, which

could not belong to the mere critic who had settled the purport of the picture, and so limited its meaning. He was one of the first to recognize the genius displayed in the early efforts of the pre-Raphaelites. When most persons saw only the crude, hard coloring, the ungracious outlines, and the startling way in which features were represented, as if they were seen through a magnifying-glass, he felt at once the power and the truth in the new School of Art, and prophesied its future influence and excellence.

The same principle belongs to his appreciation of poetry. He allowed it to make its own impression. Delicacy of passion and subtlety of feeling made that impression indelible. Presenting his heart in passiveness thus to receive, it was in his power to gain many diverse ideas from the same portion of any poem, the diversity depending on his state of health or mind at the time. The impressions and ideas thus received he then assumed lordship over, and used them as it pleased him. He brought intellect to bear upon them, and became the student and the critic. Thus he relates in his letters, that late one night he was reading the murder scene in "Macbeth;" and it arose so vividly before his imagination, that he went up stairs to bed with almost the very dread which Macbeth had in his own heart, and was obliged to go back again, to prove to himself that he was not a child afraid of his own shadow. It was easy to see that out of such a strong realization as this was born the power which produced his critical explanation of that very scene in his lecture upon poetry. He had been himself Macbeth. When he divided himself from that experience, he looked back to it and argued upon it.

Hence it was also a unique pleasure to hear him read poetry. "No one," says one of his friends, "ever interpreted more musically the rhythm, or with more appreciation the beauties, of a poet." But he seldom read aloud; he required to feel that those who listened, listened with the heart.

In the same way as he felt art, he felt the thoughts of books and men, with an acuteness prophetic of brain-disease. The pleasure he received on hearing of a noble act was so keen that it bordered upon pain. Men still recall the deep, almost stern enthusiasm of joy with which he spoke of the great obedience of the soldiers who died in the wreck of the "Birkenhead;" and the tones of his voice when he described the cry of the Hungarian nobles, "Let us die for our king, Maria Theresa!" The indignation, on the other hand, with which he heard of a base act was so intense that it rendered

him sleepless. His wrath was terrible, and it did not evaporate in words. But it was Christlike indignation. With those who were weak, crushed with remorse, fallen, his compassion, long-suffering, and tenderness were as beautiful as they were unfailing. But falsehood, hypocrisy, the sin of the strong against the weak, stirred him to the very depths of his being. "I have seen him," writes one of his friends, "grind his teeth and clench his fist when passing a man who, he knew, was bent on destroying an innocent girl." "My blood," he writes himself, after a conversation on the wrongs of women, "was running liquid fire."

From all this arose his eloquence and its power. His mind was crowded with images which he had received and arranged in a harmonious order. With these he lit up the subjects of his speech, flashing upon abstruse points the ray of an illustration, and that with a fullness of apt words, and with, at the same time, a reticence which kept the point clear in the midst of the illustration.

He had also an extraordinary power of expression and arrangement. This belonged to him partly from the sensitiveness of his ear to rhythm—for, like many who have no ear for music, he was acutely conscious of the melody of ordered words—and partly from the sensitiveness of his imagination and of his intellect: the imagination unsatisfied, unless it had grasped the heart of the thought; the intellect unsatisfied, unless it had cut, polished, and placed in the finest setting the diamond of the thought. To such a degree is this true, that, even where the form of a sentence seems to be faulty, its force is even lost if the words be transposed. "I cared almost as much for the *form*," writes one, "as for the substance of what he said, and often asked him, 'You said so and so; tell me how you put it?' This he could not endure."

So entirely was his heart in his words, that, in public speaking especially, he lost sight of every thing but his subject. His self-consciousness vanished. He did not choose his words or think about his thoughts. He not only possessed, but was possessed by, his idea; and when all was over, and the reaction came, he had forgotten, like a dream, words, illustrations, almost every thing. It was always as great a mental exertion to recall as to think out a sermon; and he was frequently unable, if he waited till Monday, to write out the notes of what he had delivered on Sunday, unless it had been partially written beforehand. After some of his most earnest and passionate utterances, he has said to a friend, "Have I made a fool of myself?"

But though he was carried away by his subject, he was sufficiently lord over his own excitement to prevent any loud or unseemly demonstration of it; he never transgressed the boundaries of what is called pulpit modesty. If the most conquering eloquence for the English people be that of the man who is all but mastered by his excitement, but who, at the very point of being mastered, masters himself—apparently cool, while he is at a white heat—so as to make the audience glow with the fire, and at the same time respect the self-possessed power of the orator—the man being always felt as greater than the man's feelings; if that be the eloquence which most tells upon the English nation, he had that eloquence. He spoke under tremendous excitement, but it was excitement reined in by will. He held in his hand, when he began his sermon, a small slip of paper, with a few notes upon it. He referred to it now and then; but before ten minutes had gone by, it was crushed to uselessness in his grasp; for he knit his fingers together over it, as he knit his words over his thought. His gesture was subdued: sometimes a slow motion of his hand upwards; sometimes bending forward, his hand drooping over the pulpit; sometimes erecting himself to his full height with a sudden motion, as if upraised by the power of the thought he spoke. His voice—a musical, low, clear, penetrative voice—seldom rose; and when it did, it was in a deep volume of sound, which was not loud, but toned like a great bell. It thrilled, also, but that was not so much from feeling as from the repression of feeling. Towards the end of his ministry he was wont to stand almost motionlessly erect in the pulpit, with his hands loosely lying by his sides or grasping his gown—his pale, thin face, and tall, emaciated form, seeming, as he spoke, to be glowing as alabaster glows when lit up by an inward fire. And, indeed, brain and heart were on fire. He was being self-consumed. Every sermon in those latter days burnt up a portion of his vital power. Weakness of body made him more excitable, and every excitement made him weaker.

But his eloquence was not only the eloquence of apt expression, of apt illustration, and of excited feeling; it was also the eloquence of thought. He united, in a rare combination, imaginative with dialectic power. He felt a truth before he proved it; but when once it had been felt, then his logical power came into play. He disentangled it from the crowd of images and thoughts which clustered round it. He exercised a serene choice over this crowd, and rejected what was superabundant. There was no confusion in his mind.

Step by step he led his hearers from point to point, till at last he placed them on the summit, whence they could see all the landscape of his subject in harmonious and connected order. He hated an isolated thought. He was not happy till he had ranged it under a principle. Once there, it was found to be linked to a thousand others. Hence arose his affluence of ideas; his ability for seizing remote analogies; his wide grasp, and his lucid arrangement of his subject; his power of making it, if abstruse, clear; if common, great; if great, not too great for human nature's daily food. For he was not only a thinker, but the thinker for Man. All thought he directed to human ends. Far above his keenness of sympathy for the true and beautiful was his sympathy for the true and beautiful in union with living hearts. He strove always fervently to make the ideal real by connecting it with humanity.

In connection with this power of eloquence was his recoil from its results. When he fancied that he was expected to shine, he would relapse into the most icy reserve. He seldom talked much in general society. He never seemed to have any feeling of superiority.

Unless elicited (writes a friend) — and that was done with difficulty — no one could have guessed the mass of information on all subjects which lay beneath that playful and quiet exterior, but nothing could be more brilliant and magical than the flow of ideas when they did come. He would go on uninterruptedly for hours. Yet he was ever eager to learn, listened to others deferentially, and spoke, even when most excited, with extreme modesty.

Every mental nerve, so to speak, of his delicate nature quivered with pain at being made the common talk and the wonder of a fashionable watering-place. If he hated one thing more than another, it was the reputation of being a popular preacher. He abhorred the very name, as something which brought with it contamination. A chivalrous gentleman, he shrank from the parade of show, the vulgarizing of his name, the obtrusion of his merits upon the public. Moreover, he felt that he was more than a fine speaker; and yet, most unfortunately, he convinced himself that his hearers only saw in him a beautiful talker, and not a teacher. Much of the indignant scorn and pride which rushed out sometimes in his words, when he spoke of the common opinions and rules of the world, may have taken their keenness from this conviction.

Not very long after he came to Brighton, a subscription was opened to present him with a testimonial. A book, elaborately bound, was placed to receive names in the reading-room of the Library. Mr. Robertson was indignant.

One day the book mysteriously disappeared. It was never known, but shrewdly suspected, that he had himself carried off the obnoxious volume, and committed it in triumph to the flames. There are praises which are insults, which can not be received without the receiver feeling self-contempt. He could not understand what he had done to deserve this torture. Such applause galled him, and stung him into galling words. He spoke of being made a stump-ordinator, of the infinite degradation inflicted on him by popular opinion, of the self-scorn which it engendered. He wrote of it, at the beginning of his ministry at Brighton, in words as strong as those which follow, which date from its close :

If you knew how sick at heart I am with the whole work of parlement, talkee, palaver, or whatever else it is called ; how lightly I hold the " gift of the gab ;" how grand and divine the realm of silence appears to me in comparison ; how humiliated and degraded to the dust I have felt, in perceiving myself quietly taken by gods and men for the popular preacher of a fashionable watering-place ; how slight the power seems to me to be given by it of winning souls ; and how sternly I have kept my tongue from saying a syllable or a sentence, in pulpit or on platform, *because* it would be popular ! \* \* \*

There was something morbid in this. He was so wrung by the false admiration which was given him, that he could not feel the true reverence of those who formed the body of his congregation. Indeed, there was an element of morbidness in all the developments of his sensitiveness. But it was a morbidness which had not grown upon him from without like a fungus on a tree, but which was the natural outcome of his constitution and temperament. It was born with him. He never could have been entirely free from it, unless he had been a soldier in constant warfare. It was increased by physical disease, till it threatened to become a tyrannous power. But here, where his greatest weakness lay, appeared his greatest strength. If he could not exactly say, " Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in mine infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," yet those who have closely known his character can say for him that he turned his necessity to glorious gain. He transmuted the dross of his nature into gold by the alchemy of Christian effort. " He was the most inflexible person," says an intimate friend, " with all his almost morbid delicacy of feeling—an iron will, impossible to move when it was fixed by principle." Another writes :

His sharpest griefs never got the better of his power of concentrating himself in thought or in action. He could put them aside, as if they did not exist. Some of his finest sermons were thought out when distress of mind, it might be supposed, only gave him leave to *feel*. Some of his hardest work in the world was done when his spirit was most keenly wounded.

He possessed a clear view of the dangers to which he was exposed by his sensitiveness and impressibility. He might have been wrecked on the same rock as Coleridge. But his resolution was early taken; he would be, by God's help, a man after the pattern of Christ Jesus. He labored from his earliest years to conquer the perilous tendencies of his nature. They arose sometimes from the excessive nervous irritation which the fierce excitement of mental exertion produced. He met them then by severe physical exercise. Into this, when it was possible for him—and that was but seldom—he entered with the eagerness with which he did every thing. He had a lithe form; his step was quick, his carriage soldier-like; and it was refreshing to meet him as he walked, his motion breathed so of activity.

It was almost amusing to go with him when he went out shooting over a moor. He was entirely absorbed in his work. He would walk for hours after a single bird, and reluctantly leave off the pursuit of this coy grouse when night began to fall. He would sit for hours in a barrel sunk in the border of a marsh, waiting for wild duck. His excitement kept him from feeling weariness, ennui, or discomfort. These hours of delight he obtained about once a year, and, in the earlier years of his ministry at Brighton, they refreshed him. But towards the end, when he had lost nervous force, the severity of the exercise which he sometimes took was a mistake. He reduced irritation by it, but he robbed himself of strength when he had none to spare.

But when the dangers to which his character was liable arose from mental or spiritual causes, he met them differently. When he was tortured by the noise of slander which surrounded him, and by the petty party opposition to which he was subjected, he had recourse to the healing influence of poetry, or took refuge in the study of chemistry, and in the dignity and calmness of the laws of that science forgot for a time the pain he suffered. He did not fall into the common mistake of endeavoring to eradicate his natural qualities because they seemed to tend to evil: he rather tried to restrain, balance, and exalt them by a higher motive. He fought with evil, he said, as Perseus fought with the sea-monster—from above. His rule of life was not "Crush what is natural," but "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Far above all other motives was his love to Christ. That was the root of his life, and the life of all his effort. It was a conscious, personal, realized devotion. It was too hallowed a feeling for him to speak much of. It colored and pervaded every thought; was an unceasing



presence with him; lay at the foundation of every endeavor; and was brought to bear on every action in life, on every book he read, and almost on every word he spoke.

Temptations and doubts he strove to solve by working among the poor. The indulging in mere aspirations he would not permit himself: he freed his ideal world from its atmosphere of sloth and vague cloud-land, by putting, as far as he could, his aspirations into action. No work was too small for him. He did not despise the dullest intellect; and was fair, patient, and gentle in argument, even with the intolerant. He listened to a child with interest and consideration. Somehow he reached the most dense in a Sunday-school class. He led the children to elaborate for themselves the thought he wished to give them, and to make it their own. No pains or patience were spared in doing this. It was strange to see so fiery a nature drudging on so meekly, and gently, and perseveringly, content to toil at striking sparks out of apparently hopeless clay. But untiring earnestness and unflinching resolution in duty made him do all things as in God's sight.

The mere pleasure of using fine words about religious feelings, and loud-sounding phrases about social wrongs, he despised with a true man's scorn. He spoke much of courtesy; and a friend has said of him, "that his bearing towards inferiors was marked by the most polished delicacy; that his consideration for the comfort of servants was so great, that they adored him." He spoke much of Truth, and he was crowned with its crown—the crown of thorns. He spoke much about Self-sacrifice, and he gave up his own pleasures and pursuits to almost any one. He grudged a sixpence spent on personal gratification, and retrenched in what was even needful, that he might give to the necessities of others, and—he died at his post with his armor on to the last. He spoke much about the wrongs of woman; and it is very touching to know that during the last year of his life he frequently went forth at night and endeavored to redeem the fallen women of Brighton. This was the way in which he waged the battle against himself. It was a stern and a concealed contest. His suffering was great; but he kept it to himself. Only to one friend he compares himself to the Spartan boy who held his cloak around him while the fox was gnawing at his entrails. The physical pain he endured during the last six months of his life was excruciating. And yet, through all this, nothing is finer than his quiet devotion to all small duties, his steadfast mastery over himself, his unwavering adherence to a course of teaching which brought upon him the censure and slander

which, however his reason might despise them, stung his heart to the last.

But he could not always restrain himself. Sometimes, when he was sure of sympathy, his passion broke forth in a redundancy of sorrowful words; or his views of life, when physical exhaustion had made him less master over dark thoughts, were poured out in the relief of almost wild expression. It is these passages in his letters which his friends have hesitated to give to the public. But without them, I repeat, any view of his character would be incomplete. Its strength could not be understood unless through what men may call its weakness. Moreover, in these states of excitement—which were partly natural and partly unnatural, partly true and partly untrue—some of his finest thoughts and most delicate analyses of feeling, and some of his most startling eloquence, were produced. Pain made him creative: it was when his heart's blood was being drawn that the heart of his genius was revealed.

The letters which are inserted after this and the following chapter were written in 1849 and 1850. It must be distinctly kept in mind by the reader who wishes to distinguish between the work of Mr. Robertson and his feelings, who wishes to separate the apparent unmanliness of some of his expressions from the manliness of his life—first, that in these years ill-health of a serious character began to throw its sombre shade over life, and extreme nervous irritability and pain to follow every intellectual exertion; secondly, that in these years, also, he recognized clearly, with a sorrow proportioned to his passionate desire for sympathy, the loneliness to which his teaching doomed him, and the systematic opposition which he prophesied, only too truly, would increase year by year in virulence. One other cause there is for the gloomy hue of some of his letters: it is, that few men have ever felt more deeply than he with the sorrow of the world. Brought much into contact with grief, and pain, and guilt—realizing by the force of his imagination the sufferings of the battle-field, and the cry of thousands, homeless, miserable, and done to death by the selfishness of men—appalled by the sin and crime which he saw everywhere and in their true light—he was often crushed to the earth by the thought of the guilt and suffering of Humanity. He felt them personally, acutely, as if they were his own. It was no fictitious pain, no ideal grief; he could not put it aside. And, in connection with this, the terrible contradiction which all this sorrow, pain, and sin seemed to give to the truth that the Ruler of this world is Love, pressed upon him with a

force which fiercely demanded a solution. Abraham's awful question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" rang in his ears, and again and again was the expression of his inmost thought. He felt that life was not worth living, unless he could find the answer to that question. In proportion to the strange depth of his power of suffering with men, and to the almost preternatural keenness with which he felt the mystery of the great problem of the universe, was the slowness with which he found the answer. But he did find it, as the reader of his letters will see—and in the Cross of Christ. Once found, he acquiesced in its teaching, quietly and faithfully. All questioning, all doubt left him as he drew near to the close of his career.\* He could look beyond the scene in which Humanity suffers, to the larger stage where suffering has its result in perfection, and bow humbly before the wisdom of the infinite Charity. But, in the mean time, the inward pain he suffered, both from the doubt and that which suggested it, continually emerges in his writings, and colors his views of life.

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*Letters and Extracts.*

XXIX.

August, 1849.

MY DEAR —, —The translation I sent you of Fichte is not the best. It was reckoned a failure; so, if you like to wait till the new one comes, which will be to-morrow, you can; or, if you prefer that, and then compare it with the other, perhaps that may be better, as it is only by degrees, and with some toil, that any one gets at Fichte's meaning. I have begun to-day a work of his, which I had never read before, with wonder and delight—partly because it must perforce elevate, and partly because it is but the scientific exposition of views to which gradually and unscientifically I have worked my own way; in which I may henceforth progress, but go back never. The first chapter singularly resembles, even in expression, the views of last Sunday's sermon, —God being apprehended by thought, and in no other way approachable by us. Yet it is scarcely singular; for Plato, or the little I read of Plato, gave me an impulse which can never end through eternity, and Fichte's view is scientific Platonism.

My whole being, love and thought, must form themselves round this, and after the spirit of the supersensuous, or else never exist at all. Oh! that I could grasp the sublime truths which have floated before my soul as the solution of life's mystery for years, and which to the mass of minds are but the world of shadows—to me the only realities! \* \* \* I am compelled to penetrate into a region that is invisible, and there, somehow, in the eternal and the unalterable, which is not subject to the vicissitudes of that which is perishable—transient emotions, vexatious circumstances—I seem to find a home. \* \* \* But this is an unsatisfactory, and, what is worse, an unproductive state.

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\* See, for proof of this, Letters at pp. 285 *et seq.* I draw particular notice to these letters, because it has been widely asserted that his opinions did not give him peace of mind, and that the gloom of his life was owing to his views of Truth being unsatisfactory to himself.

It may be grand to expatiate in a world of feeling and loneliness into which human voices do not penetrate. But we have a work to do on this earth: and I am almost sure that that work is done best by those minds which are definite, deal in formulas, and are not haunted by the sick dream of the un-found beauty, and pervaded by a conviction of the unreality of every thing except thought and the invisible.

From within we must fetch our strength; for dependence upon aught external to our own souls leaves us strengthless, when its presence is removed or delayed. \* \* \* Our best blessedness can only be shaken to the centre by ourselves. Life is what we make it. And there are delicately-organized minds in which a mental error—a fault in the tone of thinking—can produce more misery than crime can in coarser minds. \* \* \*

## XXX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I do most earnestly rejoice that people have felt an improvement, and a softened, purified tone in my ministry.

I will endeavor to develop the Catechism into the sense in which I am at present content to accept its very words. "He bore my sins," for instance, I am willing to say, and in deep humiliation, in a deeper sense than many mean; though I doubt not, because deep and because connected with the great principle which awfully pervades the universe, therefore, for that very reason, counted a heterodox sense.

It is often said, "*My sins nailed Him to the Tree.*" There is a sense in which this contains a deep and extensive truth—another in which it is merely the statement of an absurdity.

The crisis of the conflict between the kingdoms of Good and Evil took place in the death of Christ: the highest manifestation of Good in Him—the highest manifestation of Evil in the persons of those who saw the Divinest Excellence, and called it Satanic Evil. To call evil good, and good evil—to call Divine Good Satanic Wickedness—there is no state lower than this. It is the rottenness of the core of the heart: it is the unpardonable, because irrecoverable, sin.

With this evil, in its highest development, the Son of Man came into collision. He died unto sin. The Prince of this World came and found nothing congenial in Him. He was his victim, not his subject.

So far as I belong to that kingdom or fight in that warfare, it may be truly said, the Saviour died by my sin. Every time I hate a good man for his meekness or his goodness—find bad motives to account for the excellence of those who differ from me—judge sins of weakness more severely than sins of wickedness—shut God out of my soul to substitute some lie of my own or of society—I am a sharer in the spirit to which He fell a victim. He bare my sins in His body on the Tree.

Similarly, He himself says of the prophets—"The blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, shall be required of this generation." Why? "Because they bare witness that they allowed the deeds of their fathers." In their day they did the same thing in spirit which their fathers did in theirs. So in the Sanhedrim, Stephen saw the same brood of vipers which had stung Moses and the Prophets. So, too, the indulger of hatred is guilty of murder, and takes his place with murderers.

But to say that He bore my sins in this sense—that He was haunted by an evil conscience and its horrors for this lie of mine, and that cruel word, etc., is to make a statement of which it is not enough to say that it is false: it is absolutely unmeaning, as well as destructive of all *real* conception of the enormity of sin. No effort can get any conception of what is meant by conscience of another's sin. It represents Him as suffering under a delusion, and makes the whole agony base itself upon a figment, as unreal as a recovery at law

under the *noms de guerre* of "Doe and Roe," invented by those who had to defend themselves against the monkish chicanery of the Middle Ages by subtleties as ingenious as their own. Quite rightly do the advocates of this "Redemption by a figment of Law" call this system of *justification* a "forensic proceeding."

## XXXI.

Inclosed you will find one of those letters which provoke me, though meant in kindness. Is it pride which makes such things offensive, since annoyance implies conscious superiority to the praiser, and seems inconsistent with the apparent humility which disclaims power? I think not. Two gentlemen come into my chapel—one uncertain of my orthodoxy, the other strongly prejudiced against the belief of it: both go away satisfied that all is right, and magnanimously condescend to intimate approval, which, being interpreted, means all is harmless, old, regular, dull. Whereat I have no right to take offense; but the assumption of a right to approve is a little galling, because it implies the idea of being in possession of a measure by which the approver is entitled to try, and, if necessary, blame. To award approbation, is to retain the power and right of awarding rebuke. From an indisputable superior that can be borne, from a friend it is delightful, for then it is only the answer of a second and a purified conscience. No one is insulted by what his own conscience, the most sacred part of himself, affirms. But when it comes from a stranger who has no claim to friendship, and has no right, at least, to *assume* superiority, it seems to me very like the comments of a master on a school-boy's exercise, which he certainly would have scored if it had had faults, and perhaps even given him an imposition. I disclaim the power of ninety-nine out of every hundred who hear me to even judge of what I say; and that, not because I think myself superior to them, and am therefore proud, but because I live in a realm of thought which is not theirs, and they do not know the existence of the problems which I can not solve, nor can they guess the difficulties. In entering the narrow channel of the Bermudas, the pilot stands not at the helm, but at the bows, looking down into the deep water, clear as crystal, to see the coral reef above which, or rather through which, he is threading his dangerous way. Sometimes there is scarcely twice the ship's own breadth between point and point; yet between those he must go, can not pause, and ten feet divergence on either side would be shipwreck. He may do his work very awkwardly, and even be conscious of great mistakes; but with the most perfect humility he may utterly disclaim the power of any one standing on the shore to judge his seamanship, who is looking along a smooth, level surface, instead of looking down upon a bed of rocks that lie beneath the surface. No wonder that his tacks, and turns, and zig-zag eccentricities of course are perfectly unintelligible. "I would have steered direct to that point." "Yes, my good friend, but did you see the rock? and if not, what can you know about the matter? Come up here, and then give me an opinion if you can." Now, the pilot who is up there is not a wiser man than the other, but he has got a different point of view, and from that point he defies all human judgment, *until you go and sit beside him.*

## XXXII.

You ask for an explanation of Tennyson's expression:

When I felt the days before me.\*

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\* This is not Tennyson's expression, but the explanation applies truly to the lines, which are:

"Oh! to feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,  
When I heard the days before me, and the tumult of my life."

I think it is one of those of which you can not distill the quintessence without crushing the flower. The work of analysis in the laboratory is always a coarse one. Earthen crucibles and hammers, and cold furnaces and blow-pipes, no doubt, scientifically resolve all things into their elements, but the graceful forms of things disappear in the midst of the rude apparatus. However, I will try.

Our connection with the future may be a dead or a living one. Freshness of anticipation and hope make it living. Repeated disappointment or satiety dulls that feeling, and, as it were, benumbs the sense by which we vividly felt the connection thrill our being. A wire of metal connects you with the electrical machine, and every spark travels to your frame. A rod of glass connects you, too, but not electrically, being a non-conductor. You do not feel the innate, real force, the spiritual life which is in the machinery before you. It is only machinery. Or, again, did you never, in fishing, *feel* the life that is throbbing at the other end of the line when a fresh, untired fish is running out all the tackle? Did you never observe how all this changes into a dull, dead drag when either the animal is worn out, or a piece of lifeless sea-weed has got entangled on your hook, and draws it perpendicularly, heavily downward? Magnify that—fancy the vigorous pull of a whale drawing a thousand fathoms of rope after him, and the boat joyously plunging after at an appalling rate through an ocean which has no bounds visible on either side, the gunwale brought level with the waves, and the breakers dancing in their spray, with just sufficient risk to make the excitement wilder; and then, I suppose, you have a kind of illustration of a poet's young heart when "he feels the days before him, the wild pulsation of the strife." When the life of the future slackens, the mighty mass slowly gravitates, and the pull is a dead one, down rather than up; or else it rises to take breath, and lies flat—to plunge no more into the unfathomable.

## XXXIII.

September, 1849.

MY DEAR —, —What do I think of *souvenirs*? I like them *much*, provided they are not costly. Yet I know not whether I do not like even more to dispense with symbols altogether. For they gather round them, by constant use, new associations, by which the old are obliterated, the precious and hallowed first ones. All things worn or often seen are liable to this. The old habit of erecting an altar of stones to commemorate any signal event was different. It was revisited only at the interval of years, and infallibly brought back the old feeling with which it had stood in connection once. But ornaments and such things collect *accretions* of daily incidents which they suggest, and the symbol does not naturally, but only arbitrarily, recall the person or idea intended to be consecrated by it. I have an insuperable objection to presents—almost a monomania; I am happier without receiving.

There is a pretension in what is costly, too, that is provoking. It seems to affect to interpret in one kind of value that which is precious in another order altogether—feeling by gold—and feeling is simply incommensurable except by feeling. Gold no more interprets it or symbolizes it than things seen can resemble things heard. Whereas trifles—humble and unpretending—do not challenge an indignant comparison between the preciousness of the material and the preciousness of the feeling, and simply standing as memorials may become valuable.

I do not think I have rightly made clear, even yet, why purchased presents dissatisfy me. The reason is, perhaps, dimly felt, rather than definitely made plain, even to myself. It has been an instinct which I have not thought it necessary to analyze. Let me try. I think I am pained rather than pleased

by such souvenirs, because they are arbitrary symbols of regard. They are like the symbols used in algebra to represent any number, say 745. You take a letter,  $x$  or  $y$ . You say that  $y$  equals and represents 745—a connection purely arbitrary. To-morrow  $y$  may represent 20, if you say that it is to do so. It is only by an act of the will that the letter represents a number. Take it out of that connection—let the arbitrary meaning pass—and the *natural* idea suggested is a sound.

Similarly with purchased presents. I get a piece of metal or stone, and say "Let it represent my regard." This is arbitrary; for the only connection which subsists between it and me, really, is that I paid for it a certain number of pounds or shillings. It is not my idea or device executed in metal (for then, indeed, the metal does become a secondary, and the device a primary thought—provided the material be not so costly as to overwhelm and annihilate the idea of design and designer); nor is it my work, nor any thing which is peculiarly associated with my history, for the laws of such tokens absurdly lay a stress upon the gift being *new*. So that, in fact, I have merely given my friend an algebraic symbol, which might have represented another as well as myself, and will in truth some day represent *him*, if he die, and it become the property of a relation. Now it may even happen, and I think generally does, that this arbitrary meaning is not the one naturally suggested by the symbol, but is rather one which it requires a distinct effort of the will to call up and recreate. I use the pencil-case which my friend has given me, daily; but that daily use surrounds it with manifold associations. I used it, perhaps, for instance, to write a letter in some desolate place in the Alps, where I could get no ink: well, that association, in spite of myself, rivets itself to the token of my friend's affection. It lies before me ever after, suggesting that sublime scenery, and calling up the forms and features of the friends or strangers who were with me then, rather than those of the donor. Or, perhaps, instead of one vivid association, it may connect itself with innumerable weaknesses which it suggests when I look at it—sometimes one, sometimes another. It is very plain that its representation of my friend is now no longer the natural, but only an arbitrary one. I can, by an act of will recall the algebraic meaning, and recollect that it was said, Let case =  $A B C$ 's regard. But by an act of will I can also recall that regard itself without the presence of the pencil-case; so that the symbol is no real assistance to keeping him in mind, because it requires exactly the same effort which would have succeeded without its intervention.

I have no objection to receive costly presents from persons I do not value (except so far as a feeling of independence revolts against accepting them), because I possess a thing which is in itself worth having, and I do not feel any thing inadequate in the representation, for they represent themselves these valuable gifts, which is all I want. But with any one for whom I feel regard, a souvenir provokes me to look at it, just as an illuminated cloud does at sunset, because I know the glory will soon pass and leave the dull cloud behind alone. The gold will be there on the finger or on the table as usual; but the beauty of its significance will be gone or dimmed.

There are, of course, some gifts which are not arbitrary, but natural symbols, and suggest all that is desired without efforts. If Sir Charles Napier would give me the horse he rode at Meeanee with the great scar still remaining, no subsequent association could supersede that. The shot he gave my father which grazed him in the action, a letter, something that has been used or worn—these are natural memorials significant forever of one thing, and never by any possibility of a second in the same degree.

So much for receiving. I do not mind *giving*; for though I can not bear to profane, by meaner associations, any thing which has once reminded me of a friend, I feel no pain at the idea of that which has belonged to me being

profaned. Indeed, I should not apply such a word to it. I give for the pleasure of giving, and also for present use or present pleasure. When those are passed, I like to give again, something which may be of new use and new pleasure. Some years ago, when I could ill afford it, I gave a man a gold snuff-box like a boy: I was not a bit hurt by seeing that same box last year, dull, in evident disuse, lying among a number of gimcracks on a side-table. I know he values me as much as he did when I was a boy. But in receiving it is quite different.

As in this bad world below,  
Noblest things find vilest using.

I can not bear to profane, by common use, even the writing of one I care for. A direction on a parcel or an envelope I carefully tear off and put in the fire, before I could convert the paper even into the cover of a book or another parcel. So much of superstition—is it such?—clings to minds which fancy themselves entirely emancipated from all the delusions of materialism.

For these reasons I am painfully fastidious about receiving. I had rather have nothing, far rather, when I must. I dislike every thing except it be of a character such as I have indicated in the class of things enumerated above. Not arbitrary, but natural. \* \* \*

I say a flower is more precious than gold or jewels—not simply *as* precious, but *more* precious, just because it has no intrinsic value, and because it will so soon wither. Its withered leaves are more treasured than a costly gem, and more sacred because they have not two kinds of value, but only one. Such gifts are as disembodied spirits—all spirit, and pure.

All sombre thoughts pass away beneath the genial influence of this serene, cloudless sky. What a soft, pure, pearly blue! and the white smoke rises up into it in slow and most indolent wreaths, as if it were resolved to enjoy itself and *recline* upon cushions of summer air, robed in loosest, thinnest morning drapery of gauze.

Does not every *fresh* morning that succeeds a day of gloom and east wind seem to remind us that for a living spirit capable, because living, of renovation, there can be no such thing as “failure,” whatever a few past years may seem to say?

\* \* \* \* \*

Some years ago, on a moonless, but clear and starry night, I saw the aurora in a form quite different from its usual one—streaks, or rather flakes, of pale, pure, white light moving slowly and solemnly, exactly as if they were crystallizing over a broad band of red, which spanned the zenith like the reflection of a town in flames. The softer light gradually bathed the fiercer one in its own pure glow, till it blended with it into a translucent rose flush. Harmonized, and yet contrasted with the quietness of an unclouded summer's night sky, it was thrillingly beautiful, and to me, not knowing what it was, mysterious too, almost awful; yet the softest, holiest thing I ever beheld. \* \* \* That which I rejoice over in your last note is the calm contemplation of the difficulty of life, without the feeling that the mystery is practically insoluble. You are quietly prepared to try in earnest to solve it—making the ideal and the actual harmonize. Others go on contending with low wants and lofty will, till their mortality predominates. I do trust the possibility of that, the result of perpetual failure, is past with you; your immortality is to conquer. I read that prophetically, even in the passionate way in which you speak of the humiliation of our present state and sphere of action, because resolve is blended with it—a resolve which has recognized all the difficulties, and is yet prepared once more to meet them.



## XXXIV.

MY DEAR —,—It is very surprising to find how little we retain of a book, how little we have really made our own when we come to interrogate ourselves as to what account we can give of it, however we may seem to have mastered it by understanding it. Hundreds of books read once have passed as completely from us as if we had never read them; whereas the discipline of mind got by writing down, not copying, an abstract of a book, which is worth the trouble, fixes it on the mind for years, and, besides, enables one to read other books with more attention and more profit. I am very anxious to do what good I can while it is allowed me. To this, as to every other thing which has light and life, perhaps the night cometh. Then feelings pass, hopes perish: that which was becomes more faint and dreamlike every day—that which is *done* alone remains with permanency. But a man must prepare *alone*; for, as Goethe says, “mental power elaborates itself in solitude.” All else is only valuable as an impulse and an excitement to this. Much of our time is necessarily taken up, but we should force ourselves resolutely sometimes to be alone. \* \* \* Broken and interrupted as life is, it demands all the more earnest effort to prevent it *all* falling into fragments. I knew the restlessness and misery of time occupied in a desultory way—the hurried scramble into which it converts existence, and the loneliness and aimlessness which it leaves behind, and which tempt one to get rid of them by the same unprofitable seeking of distractions again.

\* \* \* \* \*

All devotional feeling requires sacrificial expression. There is a “sacrifice of the lips,” and there is also the sacrifice of an offering which involves expense and suffering. The first, being the readiest at command, is the most usually given; but, being given, it unfortunately prevents the other, because, first of all, costing little, words are given prodigally, and sacrificial acts must toil for years to cover the space which a single fervid promise has stretched itself over. No wonder that the slow acts are superseded by the available words, the weighty bullion by the current paper-money. If I have conveyed all I feel by language, I am tempted to fancy, by the relief experienced, that feeling has attained its end and realized itself. Farewell, then, to the toil of the “daily sacrifice!” Devotion has found for itself a vent in words.

Now there seems to me to be a great difference in the effects produced by these two kinds of sacrificial expression. That by words is simply relief—necessary, blessed—without which smothered feeling would be torture—sometimes, in some minds, madness. But, being only relief, it does not strengthen the feeling, except so far as it prevents morbidness. It rather weakens it by getting rid of the painfulness. It is a safety-valve; but the danger is that so much force should escape by an impetuous rush through this—that there should be little left to bring higher energies into action. For this reason I rejoice, even though made restless, when my words can not be commensurate with emotions. The other kind of expression, on the contrary—the sacrifice of acts—is not only a relief, but a strength to feeling. You condense your floating vague desires in something that does not disperse into thin air. There it is, visible—done; one of the facts of life; part of your history, credit realized in gold; a pledge for the future, for this reason, that if your feelings should alter afterwards, all those acts which have cost so much are thrown away, and become so much time, suffering, expense, lost forever. You guard the feeling for the sake of not losing all this. Thus deeds become a home which arrest and bind to themselves the feeling and the love which built them up. Your heart becomes the inmate of its own acts, and dwells in the midst of its expenditure. It has given away its home, and it has no other home except in remaining near the one to whom all this has

been given. Thenceforth two spirits dwell together. I think the *heavenly* philosophy of this is contained in those words, "Sell that ye have, and give alms, \* \* \* for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." We can not afford to lightly throw away that person or that cause on which we have ventured so much.

No friendship is worth the name, unless it does the highest good, assisting to escape from the manifold forms of selfishness, and to look at duty with fresh impulse.

\* \* \* \* \*

People make great mistakes about fickleness. An impetuous mind shows more ardor in small things than others do, and therefore is supposed to be deeply engaged, whereas all the time it may be conscious to itself of merely hovering round rapidly without any intention or fixing, or any suspicion of being supposed to have fixed. "Such touches are but embassies \* \* \* to tamper with the feelings ere it found empire for life." Did you ever see the hawk moth in his marvellous gyrations, poised in air with wings vibrating so rapidly as to be almost invisible, though scarcely moving from the spot? He will try a hundred leaves and flowers, or else how could he know where to rest? but he is quite in earnest all the time, and it is the steady pause and unerring dart of the hawk itself at last. I should not call the wild, shy insect fickle.

I have been sitting out to look at this lovely night, with a pale pearly sky, *into*, not *at*, which you look, till you have pierced into the forever. Oh! for the "sea-psalm" and "the tender grace of a day which is dead," and never can come back! These are the moments when we feel the strange union we have with apparently unconnected existence; yet not the moments when we most strongly realize our immortality. For that, I think, one impulse of human affection or sympathy is more potent.

### XXXV.

It is impossible to calculate the effects which may be produced by distrust and suspicion. They make the heart collapse, and wither the character. I believe that universal distrust would ruin any character.

If any thing like insincerity or aiming at effect be hinted, it is but natural to endeavor to remove such impressions; but this can be only done by making every word and act look as probable and as natural as is possible. True feelings and true words are suppressed, if they do not seem likely, even supposing that untrue ones are not simulated instead, because they seem likely. All this produces a secret sense of acting a part: true it is that the part is only this, to seem what we are; but that itself is acting, and it is the commencement of a habit of insincerity. Not really insincerity in itself, it is yet in feeling so like to the feeling of insincerity that the transition from one to the other is fearfully facilitated. When the feeling of real duplicity or insincerity actually presents itself, the mind is already half familiar with it, having been familiar with the semblance, and does not recoil with that vehemence which marks a heart that has never suspected itself, nor been suspected. I would engage, if it were not a Satanic task, to make any child a liar by cross-questioning every assertion, and showing him that I suspected every thought and feeling. He would soon learn to dwell in the region of plausibilities, and cease to breathe the fresh, free air of unconscious truth.

I must have expressed myself very ill for you to have mistaken what I said respecting prayer. I did not mean that the change of heart can not be obtained by prayer. I only said, though evidently not with sufficient distinctness, that Simon Magus's leaning upon Peter's prayer was of a piece with the rest of his conduct, and belonged to a mind which looked for mar-

vellous effects from external agency. Money, imposition of hands, prayer—it was all the same—something that could be performed independently of character, any thing but inward moral effort. Prayer was to Simon of the nature of a charm: certain cabalistic words, of the secret of making which efficacious Peter was in possession. I think there is a great difference between Simon's praying himself and asking another to pray for him. Of course, the latter is also done by Christians, rightly; but in the mouth of a man like Simon such a request is only superstition, if you compare it with the rest of his character. Indeed, I believe that the reliance which many people now place on the intercession of others for them, leading, as I have seen it lead, to an indolent feeling of some mysterious transaction going on without the sphere of their cognizance, in which they are interested, and the results of which will some day be comfortably their own, is very much of the same nature—a mere belief in magic.

It is also possible that even a man's own prayer may assume this character, and be little more of a spiritual act than the Calmuck's rotation of a metal plate, on which the prayer is inscribed: such, unquestionably, was the prayer of the Pharisees, who expected that "they should be heard for their much speaking." Whenever praying degenerates into saying prayers, or when prayer becomes *prayers*, measured and counted, acts instead of utterances, I think this has taken place. Only in this sense could I say that the soul can not invest itself with the Spirit through prayer.

As to the remainder of your question—where the inward change begins?—there you touch a point on which I hold it impossible to give theoretical satisfaction, though it does not seem to be difficult to answer it to our own selves practically. The question, in fact, touches the great difficulty of the union of the Spontaneous with the Necessary. A reply—one of the best I know—is given in a book I am reading; whether it will satisfy you I can not yet say:

"What makes a man turn to God in the first instance?" Unquestionably, the Spirit that is seeking him; but which is also seeking us, which requires a reciprocal effort on our part. I firmly believe that the Universal Spirit, "not far from any one of us," is seeking all; and in the union-point, where the will of the Finite is changed by, and voluntarily adopts as its own, the will of the Infinite, lies the answer to the deep question you have put—"What makes a man turn to God in the first instance?" I despair of ever giving, or ever seeing given, a clearer reply than this, which leaves the matter still unfathomable; for plainly there is something in it deeper than the farthest-reaching minds have yet penetrated. Once it was a question of torture to me, interfering with energy, and paralyzing me with the feeling of being a mere machine, acting under the delusion of spontaneousness. Now I am pretty well satisfied with the practical solution of the question, except in moments when thought works darkly, apart from action—God's own appointed eye-salve for the blinding disease of speculative tendencies. My reply (for myself sufficient) is this:—Reasoning tells me I am a leaf, blown about by the breath of the spirit-wind as it listeth. I review the reasoning step by step, find no flaw in it. Nothing but a horrible predestination environs me. Every act of my past and future life, external and internal, was necessitated. The conclusion is irrefutable. I act upon this. Immediately I find that, practically, I have got wrong. I can not act upon the idea of being fated, left of will, without injuring my whole being. My affections are paralyzed, my actions disordered. I find, therefore, that the view which is theoretically truth, translated into conduct, becomes practically a lie. Now, on the other hand, conscience tells me I am free. I am to seek God. I am not to lie passive, waiting for the moving of the waters, but to obey a voice within me which I recognize as divine, and which says, "Arise, take up thy bed and

walk." My intellect stands in contradiction to my conscience; but conscience is given me to act by. In matters of duty, therefore, I am bound to obey my conscience rather than my intellect. I believe the voice which says, "You can seek God and find him," rather than the one which says, "Poor victim of fantasy, you can not stir; you can only wait!" There is the best *concise* reply I can give you to your question.

## XXXVI.

*A Character.*

I thought I saw that sympathy and questionings had roused her, and any thing is better for her than a dead calm, when the sails hang flaccid by the masts. I build the hope of usefulness upon this kind of influence with more certainty than upon any other, and it is a great delight to me to find that it is not yet exhausted, but still tells; just the same kind of delight which a pilot, I suppose, feels when, in the midst of a long tropical lull, the ship once more acknowledges the helm in his hand. And this is only one of the many indications which makes the wants and needs of her character intelligible to me. Excitement. The word, unfortunately, only has a bad sense, and we have not another for the corresponding good one; as our phlegmatic national character can not acknowledge any excitement to be good or natural, and therefore provides no name for such an idea. Excitement—by which I mean that which *stirs*, and gives us a vivid consciousness of actually being—is at once the health and disease, the food and poison, the need and the bane, of her existence.

Some people can be wound up, and go for years without winding up again; but you can not wind up a Geneva watch in that way. The longer a habit is persevered in, the easier it becomes to them. It is not so with her: she needs perpetually the construction of a set of habits, in order to save her from the weariness of "unchartered freedom;" but no sooner has habit threatened to become inveterate than it passes into monotony, and she pants for freedom—she wants then again to feel

—The wild pulsation that she felt before the strife,  
When she heard the days before her, and the tumult of her life.

The truth is, that it is a living life that she needs—successions of the habitual and the impulsive: the habitual, to give her rest; the impulsive, to make her feel voluntariness—the life of feeling instead of the horrid deadness of machinery. But every time she passes from one of these states into the other will be a state of trial—settling down from excitement, rousing up from monotony. Both will cause her suffering, just as drowning and resuscitation are both miserable sensations. The only remedy against this would be to discover, if possible, a new invigorating excitement before the old has worn out. She is happy, calm, bright, active, good, energetic, when she has been moved; for I perceive—and how well I understand it!—that her heart sets her intellect and other powers in motion, not her intellect her heart. I wish I knew how deep necessity for excitement could be harmonized with equally deep need of rest. No form of life will do that which does not healthily combine satisfactions for both these wants. I have not said all I want to say about excitement. It seems to me, as things are, to do her more harm than good; she takes it indiscriminately of all kinds. That astonishing description given by De Quincey of the experience of an opium-eater, passing from sublimities almost celestial into horrors quite infernal, \* \* \* or that strange state which I felt for twelve hours under the influence of chloroform, and vainly attempted to describe. If she would use the chloroform of life prudently, under control, to assuage pain, it might be well. Her exquisite susceptibility, managed

with a philosophy which she is capable of, and which is but the application of, and the only real use of self-anatomy, would fit her to be one of the noblest beings I ever conceived. I speak thus out of painful experience. My nature resembles hers in many things—impulsive, sustained in good by stimulus, flagging without it; and yet exhausted sometimes to a state in which I could call Dante's conceptions of the *Inferno* dull. For example, the thought of drudging on here at the same work, unvaried; two sermons a Sunday, inspiration by clock-work for several years, is simply the conception of an impossibility. I want perpetually the enthusiasm which comes from fresh views of duty and untrodden paths of usefulness—new impulse from the heart; yet that in itself, when it comes, leaves me worn to the extremity of endurance. Something of this I have observed in her, with keener susceptibilities and less of the necessity which, at the same time that it galls, forces me to work at a given time. Consequently, I make no doubt, she suffers more and has fewer remedies. My safety lies, or rather lay, in the resolve to work up to the collar, hot and hard, without intermission to the last, not leaving time or coolness to feel the parts that were galled, and raw, and wrung. It would, I suppose, have ended soon, only in doing all this I stirred the human feelings of others for good. \* \* \* However, I have that which she has not—a routine. \* \* \* It is from this similarity that, knowing myself, I think I partly know her and her needs. The key to all her character is its impulsiveness, and the whole secret of her moral improvement and inward happiness lies, not in the blunting, but in the right direction of it. \* \* \* Strength is what we want in all trials, small or great. The cup did not pass, even at the entreaty with tears which came from Him, but there was seen an angel strengthening Him to bear, and to drink it in gentleness, not to put it aside.

## XXXVII.

*Another.*

Often it is the safest way to shut the eyes and be half-blind to many things in a friend's character, which must be taken as it is, for better for worse; but in —'s character I am grateful to find that his perfect transparency reveals only the more delicately the moss-fibres, which are not blemishes but beauties in the rock-crystal. I was prepared to discover many faults, but I was not prepared to find that the very faults and the things which disappoint will bear the magnifying-glass, and only give fresh insight into a character which perfectly astonishes me by its exquisite delicacy. I do verily believe that his imperfections are like pearls in the sea-shell—aberrations from healthful nature, if you will, but more tender, and tinted with heavenlier iridescence than even the natural shell itself.

Some failings are so precious that they command reverence, and touch deeply, like the fine blue mould which grows on sweetness, and which you gently brush aside until a closer scrutiny has shown you how curiously and finely beautiful it is. I can trust that character.

Altogether, my conviction receives fresh accessions of strength that, in all that belongs to the finest as well as the loftiest of character, I have never met any thing that came near what I dreamed—a being not conventionally right, nor correct by rule, not stiffened into propriety by a little hoard of maxims, but moving often in new worlds amidst relationships and spheres of feeling where others would be bewildered, and left without chart or compass, and yet guided unerringly by a kind of sublime instinct, as the bird of passage is, in its high flight for the first time through fields of air, where the sound of wings was never heard before. The more I see, the more I honor that marvellous heart, the more I feel it is unlimited and incalculable; in this way possessing that of the infinite, without which I suppose it would be impossible to feel

towards any thing with perfect security of permanence. ——'s character is a living one, inexhaustible. None can prophesy what he will say or do under given circumstances ; but when the event has shown, then all is found in harmony with the rest, and beautiful ; and the discovery of these new traits is a source of perpetual surprise and ever-fresh pleasure. From the first, I perceived that —— was not to be tried by the laws by which others are fairly tested, just because their life is guided by them. I should as little think of referring ——'s life to the ordinary maxims of convention as I should of applying the simple ellipse of the common planet's revolution to determine the course and aberrations of the comet ; yet the comet is vague and eccentric only to an astronomy which is not advanced enough to estimate the larger number, and the complication of the forces which are at work within it and without it. Its wild and wondrous flight is just as really in obedience to a law within itself, as the career of a common star—only a higher and more comprehensive law ; and its apparently capricious movements might be calculated with as much certainty, if only the mathematics large enough were found. I like a mind and heart which I can not calculate, and yet in which I have the firmest trust that there is in them no caprice, and which are forever ruled by law. I can repose on such an one in faith, even when I can not understand. Only by faith can friendship with such an one subsist. Nothing has struck me more than the refined perceptions in reference to a friendship that is passed. It is very rare and very beautiful to see feelings which once were true respected after their truthfulness has passed away. \* \* \* There is strength as well as delicacy in one who can still respect and be just to the memory of obliterated friendship.

## XXXVIII.

*A Stray Thought.*

*Perhaps no man can attain the highest excellence who is insensible to sensuous beauty.* A sense of earthly beauty may, and often does, lead to softness, voluptuousness, and defilement of heart ; but its right result is to lead on as a stepping-stone to the sense of a higher beauty. Sensuous beauty leaves the heart unsatisfied ; it gives conceptions which are infinite, but it never gives or realizes the infinite.

For human beauty is a sight  
To sadden rather than delight,  
Being the prelude of a lay  
Whose burden is decay.

Still it *leads* on to the infinite. It answers partly to a sense which it does not satisfy, but leaves you craving still, and, because craving, therefore seeking. The true objective of that sense is moral beauty ; and by degrees we find and feel, as the outward fades and crumbles away, that there is a type of real beauty hidden under its seeming. Through the sensuous we perceive the supersensuous ; through the visible the invisible loveliness. Through disappointment at the unreal phantom, we learn to believe in and live for the unchangeable. No man knows the highest goodness who does not feel beauty. The beauty of holiness is its highest aspect. To act right because it is beautiful, and because noble, true, self-denying, pure acts commend themselves to a soul attuned to harmony, is the highest kind of goodness. "To see the King in his beauty" is the loftiest and most unearthly attainment. Can any one be keenly alive to this who has no heart for external beauty ? Surely he who is callous to form and color, and unmoved by visible beauty, is not above, but below our nature ; he may be good, but not in the highest order of goodness. Goethe says that the Beautiful is above the

Good : probably meaning that the beauty of an action is a more spiritual and elevated notion than its obligation or its usefulness.

\* \* \* \* \*

He was a wise father who firmly severed the rope by which one son was precipitated into the abyss forever, in order that he might secure the other the half of his happiness. And if one half of man's being can never fulfill its end in this life, it is but wise to give to it the eternal farewell resolutely and decisively, if the unexpected prospect present itself of enabling the other, which is, after all, the nobler half, to rise out of the caverned gloom into the light of day. Yet it is a desolate sensation and a sharp one—that act of drawing the knife across the strands of the cord, and saying, quietly, “forever.” Not a pleasant one when the sullen plunge of that which was once so cherished is heard below in the dark waters of a sea which never gives up her dead. \* \* \* The other half is destined to ascend like the brother saved by the sacrifice of the other son.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

OCTOBER, 1849—DECEMBER, 1850.

Visit to Cheltenham.—New Interest in the Lives of others and in Ministerial Work.—Depression.—Great Intellectual Activity.—Afternoon Lectures on the Book of Genesis.—Gorham Case.—Sermons on Baptism, on the Sabbath, on the Atonement.—Virulent Opposition.—Solitary Position.—Summing up of Life.—Internal dissension in the Working-man's Institute.—Proposition to admit Infidel Publications into the Library.—His Speech on the Occasion.—Its Meaning.—Its partial Success.—Reconstruction of the Association.—His Letters on the Subject.—Speech at the Meeting against the Papal Division of England into Dioceses.—Two Letters of Gratitude from Working-men.

Letters from October, 1849, to December 31, 1850.

IN October, 1849, Mr. Robertson paid a short visit to Cheltenham. He walked and rode over the haunts which had been endeared to his youth. He renewed some old acquaintances, and rekindled the embers of old associations. There were many happy and many exquisitely painful recollections awakened within him. “These cases,” he says, speaking of some disappointments he had suffered, and some opportunities he had lost, “have come like the odor of newly-turned earth upon my heart.” On the whole, the visit appears to have done him good. Perhaps the comparison which it forced him to institute between the past and the present made more plain than before his own advance in intellectual energy and spiritual knowledge. It is by comparing periods, not days of life, that progress becomes manifest. He returned to Brighton convinced that he had gained clear views of truth. In the Tyrol, in 1847, he had despaired; now, though he was wearied of life, he could say, “I know the right, and even in darkness will steer right on.”

There arose in him about this time, also, a greater interest

in the lives of others. He had thought too much about his own trials and difficulties. He had been a "self-torturing sophist." Speaking of his past life, he says of himself, "Formerly my eyes but slept to look within: all my interest in the outward world faded in comparison with my intense interest in the inner world." But now he had discovered new interests. He found among his congregation some whose mental and spiritual difficulties were similar to those which had been his own, and to whom he could give the sympathy and help which are born of a Suffering which has passed into Victory. All his powers were aroused. By entering fully into the lives of others he freed himself from much of that painful self-consciousness which is the curse of a sensitive character. In proportion as his friendship was deep was his imagination penetrative into the characters of his friends, and that to such a degree that he took their lives into his own. And for all in whom he became interested, he was untiring in effort. He invented new plans for their lives, new interests, new pursuits. He sought ceaselessly for remedies for their trials, and means of escape from their perplexities. There never lived a truer friend.

It was at this time, also, that his interest in his ministerial work became greater, though, from his letters, the contrary might be imagined. But the passages in which he describes his dislike of preaching and his own coldness of heart are in reality descriptions of the reaction of feeling after the intense excitement of preaching. Such passages are almost always to be found in letters written on Monday. They are in themselves proof of the almost awful intensity with which he labored. He could not do his duty with the quiet monotonousness which neither wears out the mind nor exhausts the body. He did it with a repressed fierceness which, when the time of its expression—on Sunday—was over, left him a prey to thoughts which, in healthier moments, he denied to be his own. "I am not fit," he says, "for ministerial work. I want years and years to calm me. My heart is too feverish, quivers and throbs too much as flesh recently cut by the surgeon's knife." Thus the deeper his interest in his work, the greater was his excitement; and the greater the excitement, the more morbid was the reaction; the more gloomy the aspect in which he saw his labors, the darker his misgivings of their success.

And it is no wonder that he was at this time so exhausted and so painfully depressed, for his mental work was great. Never during his whole life had his intellect been more productive. In October he preached upon the question of the



Sabbath, which was being then agitated in Brighton in connection with some new post-office regulations. The sermon was published in the First Series, under the title of "The Shadow and Substance of the Sabbath." In November he embodied in a sermon—"Caiaphas's View of Vicarious Sacrifice"—his partly original theory of the Atonement. In December alone he preached fifteen times—mostly on the advent of Christ. He delivered to crowded congregations, on Friday mornings, four Advent lectures on Christianity in contact with the Greek, the Roman, the Barbarian, and the Jew, which were in their way unique. He preached on Sunday mornings such sermons as "The Means of Realizing the Second Advent;" "The Principle of the Spiritual Harvest;" and "The Loneliness of Christ." In the afternoons he finished his lectures on the Acts of the Apostles, with which he had begun the year. Towards the end of the month, he preached—on the day of public mourning for the Queen Dowager—the only sermon published during his lifetime—"The Israelite's Grave in a Foreign Land." Most of these sermons have been preserved; and they are, even in a literary point of view, wonderful, considering the short time in which they were produced, for their sustained power of thought and of expression, for their research and originality. None of them are unworthy of the others; none of them betray carelessness of preparation, or dependence on mere fluency of diction. It is fortunate that they were preserved, though their preservation cost him more labor than their preparation. They were written out for a friend, from memory, the evening of the day on which they were delivered. Every one knows how irksome it is to recall, in cold blood, what has been said in excitement; to write out, in the study alone, what has been brought out by the presence of numbers. It was peculiarly irksome and irritating to him, but he did it freely and gladly, because impelled by friendship. He forgot the toil; but the toil did not forget to produce its fruit of exhaustion. If there be added, to complete this account of one month's intellectual work, that almost every day he was engaged in preparing the pupils of the Training School for examination, it is astonishing that he was not more morbid in feeling and outworn in body.

Early in January, 1850, he went away to recruit his health and to visit some friends in Ireland; but the visit was not long enough to restore his strength. On his return, he commenced lecturing in the afternoons on the Book of Genesis. His letters prove how systematically and fully he prepared

for this work. The lectures, when published, will show with what mingled wisdom and freedom he met the difficulties of the earlier chapters; how fairly he stated the claims of scientific and historical truth, even when they were in conflict with the narrative of the sacred text; and while declaring that the Mosaic cosmogony could not be reconciled with geological facts, still succeeded in showing its inner harmony, in principles, with the principles of scientific geology. Neither did he shrink from putting his congregation in possession of the results of German criticism upon Genesis. He made them acquainted with the discussion on the Jehovah and Elohim documents, but he did not deny the Mosaic compilation of these documents. He discussed fully the question of the universality of the Flood. He spoke with a boldness, adorned with a rare reverence, upon the vexed and generally avoided subjects of the confusion of tongues, the destruction of the cities of the plain, the temptation of Abraham.\* In no case, however, was his preaching destructive, but constructive. Men went away from his chapel opposed, it is true, to the popular theory of inspiration, but deeply convinced of *an* inspiration. It was, indeed, impossible, in treating of these matters, to avoid the great question of Inspiration, and its limits; it was, therefore, introduced incidentally from Sunday to Sunday. His mind became stirred on the subject. But the only result of this interest was his translation at this time of Lessing's small treatise on "The Education of the Human Race."† The following sentence occurs in one of his letters, written in March, 1850:

I projected once a work on Inspiration, and had well-nigh resolved to do it—a year ago, when the impulse to do great things and to be a standard-bearer was renewed with mighty force. Had I kept to this resolve, Lessing's remarks, and some other fragments, should have been translated as pioneers; for the English mind is not prepared yet, and Lessing's advice (67, 68, 69)‡ is worth attending to.

In March, while these lectures on Genesis were still continuing, the Gorham case was decided. With the decision given he fully agreed; but he thought it necessary to meet the whole question openly before his congregation, and en-

\* See Appendix III.

† Published in London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1858.

‡ 67. "The youth must consider his Primer as the first of all books, that impatience at being only preparing may not hurry him on to things for which he has, as yet, laid no basis.

68. "And that is also of the greatest importance now. Thou abler spirit, who art fretting and restless over the last page of the Primer—beware! Beware of letting thy fellow-scholars mark what thou perceivest afar, or what thou art beginning to see!

69. "Until these weaker fellow-scholars are up with thee, rather return once more back into this Primer, and examine whether that which thou takest only for duplicates of the method, for a blunder in the teaching, is not, perhaps, something more."

deavor, as was his custom, not to reconcile the opinions of both parties, or to steer a middle course between both, but to discover a higher truth, in which all that was true in the opposing views might be retained, and all that was false discarded. This was done, as he believed, in the two sermons which have been published.\*

They created a great sensation in Brighton. They displeased, of course, both the extreme parties; but they reconciled to the Church many who had despaired of ever accepting the teaching of her Baptismal Services.

Thus within the short space of six months, which perhaps were the most important in their results on Brighton, and through his published sermons on the general public, he had—not with that pharisaic liberalism which thanks God that it is not as other men are—not from the desire of being peculiar—not with any thought of self, but from faithful following and brave speaking of what he believed to be true—put himself into opposition with the whole accredited theological world of Brighton on the questions of the Sabbath, the Atonement, Inspiration, and Baptism. The results were sad and dreary for him. His words were garbled; passages from his sermons, divorced from their context, were quoted against him; persons who could not understand him came to hear him and look at him, as a strange phenomenon; he became the common talk of all the theological tea-tables of the town. People were solemnly warned against him; those who knew little of his doctrines, and less of himself, attacked him openly, with an apparently motiveless bitterness. He had dared to be different from the rest of the world, and that in itself was revolutionary. He was called Neologian, Socialist, Skeptic: all the cruel armory of fanaticism, and especially the weapon of blind terror, was used against him.

In December, 1849, he writes:

It is not all smooth sailing. Indeed, the bitterness and virulence of which I hear in every direction are quite unaccountable; \* \* \* and women are even more violent in their bitterness than men. Once these things moved me: it is strange how little I care for them now. Once I met them with defiance, and scorn for scorn: now I wonder they ever could have provoked me. I desire to be as meek and gentle under dispraise and dislike as I am indifferent to flattery. Oh that I could breathe the Spirit of Him who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not! For, in his case, *all* was undeserved; but I can not tell how much, in my case, rashness and pride have irritated people. This, however, I have learnt—that three years of perpetual warfare with the world, and the repayal of hatred for love, were no trifling endurance. To simply bear the dislike which had been provoked was not so difficult; but to persevere in exasperating it day by day, and

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\* Sermons (Second Series) III. and IV.

never flinch even when His loving spirit sank and flagged in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, and still go on, till hatred did its worst—oh! I think I know what that must have been to a loving spirit, when I so felt it with a stern one!

And on January 1, 1850, he writes, speaking of the sermon on the death of the Queen Dowager :

The sermon will be published, I expect, this week. It will be some time before I rush into print again ; and that was not the sermon to have selected. It has nothing in it—at least, nothing that I know of—good or bad ; though, I doubt not, the heretic-hunters will find plenty of tendencies towards Mohammedanism, Red Republicanism, Puseyism, and Swedenborgianism. I was tormented into publishing, and in an evil hour of weakness gave way, for which weakness I now feel the twinges of remorse. How long will sermonizing continue ? With all my heart, I hope not to the end of life, unless life is very nearly done ; for it is a kind of mean martyrdom by a lingering death, like the benevolent system of roasting at a slow fire, in which the good Christian people of former times manifested the extent of their Christian proficiency.

Thus, a partaker of the destiny of those who dare to preach Truth higher and more spiritual than is recognized by the teachers of their time, he stood apart—a very solitary man. On the last day of 1849 he preached on the loneliness of Christ. The sermon was an unconscious but vivid portrait of his own career and life ; it was written with the blood of his own heart. And no one can be astonished who places himself in his position, and realizes his ultra-sensitiveness, at the summing-up of his work at Brighton, written in February, 1850. It is almost needless to say that this summing-up, though true to his own point of view, was not in reality true. His labors had been most successful ; the greater part of his congregation were devoted to him ; he was revered and loved by them with an unobtrusive reverence and a silent love, which were too deep to be openly expressed. But this very silence of affection and veneration, so different from the loud applause given generally to a popular preacher, he, most strangely, almost willfully, refused to recognize. He only saw in the mass of his congregation those who came to criticise or sneer, or to listen to him as a stump-orator ; he only heard the slander, the bitter speaking, the theological clamor of his opponents. To all the rest he was blind and deaf. He sums up thus, in a most touching manner, his life :

February 11, 1850.

A year has passed, nearly, since I resolved to live above this world. O God ! how little has been done ! High, bright, enthusiastic hopes of things impossible, and of things possible still, how they teemed in my imagination ! The ideal, of course, always transcends the actual, and now experience of life again, with its manifold struggles, “fallings from us, vanishings,” has left a sobered, saddened, but unconquerable resolve to live in earnest.

Life is real, life is earnest,  
 And the grave is not its goal;  
 "Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"  
 Was not written of the soul.

Farewell, all visions and wishes of distinction—farewell to them forever! But not farewell to something holier and better, far holier, and more worthy of beings whose divine spark is mixed with clay. I can hear in my heart the "still sad music of humanity," and selfishness seems to me even more contemptible than it did, now that I am more distinctly conscious of an end to live for. *My* career is done. And yet I do not look on life with any bitter or disappointed feeling, but gently and even gratefully. I read the last stanza of Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality from the Recollections of Childhood," which have something of the subdued and chastened feeling which I am beginning to realize:

Though nothing can bring back the hour  
 Of splendor in the grass, or glory in the flower, etc.

I am not sorry that the wild throb of romantic, boyish anticipation of a future can never be felt again. I know the realities of a world of error now, but whose Maker's name I am profoundly convinced is Love. I feel its grand, sad laws, and I bow myself to them submissively, not wishing them other than they are.

These were his thoughts in March, 1850. It was now, while every thing connected with him had a curious interest for the little world of Brighton, that the Institute for Working-men, to the welfare of which he had united himself from the beginning, began to suffer from internal dissension. He had long foreseen the possibility of this. There was a radical error, in his opinion, in the constitution of the society. In his preface to the "Address on the Question of the Introduction of Skeptical Publications into the Library of the Institute," he states this error clearly, and its results. After narrating the origin of the Institute and its objects, he proceeds:

It was, of course, foreseen that the rock on which such a plan might be wrecked would be any successful effort to divert the funds and machinery of the Institute from its original intention to the purposes of a political party.

But in this case the withdrawal of all well-disposed persons would leave the association to dwindle till it became quite extinct. For its very existence depended upon numbers. The experiment, therefore, appeared to be a perfectly safe one, inasmuch as perversion of its purposes must inevitably be followed quickly by annihilation.

One fatal oversight (such, at least, it appears to the author of these pages) in the constitution of the society realized the foreseen danger. It has been justly held that the working-men ought to have in their own hands the management of their own society, lest the smallest suspicion should arise that there was any desire in those who were their benefactors to coerce or trammel them. Every attempt at interference was scrupulously avoided. All this was wise and just. But beyond this, not only was the domination of the upper classes made impossible, but even their assistance and advice excluded, by making honorary members incompetent to vote or act in committee—a mistake which originated in an over-scrupulous generosity on the part of one who suggested it, but fatal, because false in principle.

To have vested the power of unlimited control or rule in the richer classes would have been a surrender of the very principle on which the plan rested. But to reject all co-operation and assistance from them, to receive their contributions and refuse their advice, was to create and foster a spirit, not of manly, but of jealous independence, and to produce in a new form that vicious state of relationship between class and class which is at this day the worst evil in our social life—the repulsion of the classes of society from each other at all points except one, so as to leave them touching at the single point of pecuniary interest. And thus the cementing principle of society is declared to be the spirit of selfishness—the only spirit which is essentially destructive. A fatal blunder!

It was on Thursday, March 28, that the proposition to admit infidel publications was discussed in a meeting of the members of the Institute. He wished to go, and “to impart,” as he said, “a healthier tone, if possible;” but on the same night he writes:

I did not attend the meeting of the Working-men’s Association, as I told you I had intended, and am almost sorry I did not; but some of the committee were afraid for me of violence and rudeness from the Socialists, and thought, too, that even if I swayed the vote by a speech against the infidel publications, they would only say that it had been done by the influence of priestcraft. On this consideration I left them to fight the battle for themselves, and I sincerely hope that they have got a signal victory. But I find by inquiry that Socialism has made terrible strides in England: Louis Blanc’s views are progressing swiftly. They say we must get rid of the superstitious notion of an invisible God. Till that is done nothing can be effected. And then, of course, Communism and a scramble for property ensue.

A strong Radical told me that he can remember the time when Toryism was in the ascendant in public meetings here, and the Radicals only just able to make head against it. Then Radicalism became triumphant; but now Radicalism is to Socialism what Toryism was to Radicalism—a kind of feeble aristocracy which can scarcely show its head, so completely is it put down by the ultra-socialism of Louis Blanc’s school.

A few days afterwards he writes again:

I have been all the morning interrupted by deliberations respecting the affairs of the Working-men’s Institute, which is in terrible disorder. Poor—— is dead! and there is no one to stem the torrent of infidelity but myself. I am going to make a desperate attempt in a public address.

It was almost imperative that he should do so, for he was bound up with the interests of the Institute. He felt that he was personally compromised by its proceedings. He felt that the whole cause of the elevation of the working-man was in jeopardy. He would not be silent. He asked no advice of either party; alone, he took the whole responsibility of a public address. It was a great responsibility. For, on the one hand, there was the large minority of skeptical and chartist members in the Institute, who would call his effort “priestcraft,” and prate about being lorded over by a clegyman and a gentleman, and perhaps attempt per-

sonal violence; and, on the other hand, outside of the Institute, there were not only those who, exasperated against him already, were likely to become more so by the bold way in which he felt he ought to speak; but also others, who, having seen enthusiastic folly in the whole scheme from the beginning, would now think this last attempt to save a sinking ship the crowning folly.

With that fine confidence so characteristic of him, he threw himself upon the sense and candor of the men.

His speech was long remembered for its tact. The great room of the Town Hall was crowded to excess. Every class in Brighton was represented in the audience. All the working-men of the Institute were there. The large minority of skeptical Socialists had come determined to make a disturbance—to hoot him down. They had dispersed themselves in parties throughout the room. He began very quietly, with a slow, distinct, and self-restrained utterance. He explained the reason of the meeting. When he spoke of himself as the person who had summoned them, as one who was there to oppose the introduction of the infidel books, knots of men started up to interrupt him; a few hisses and groans were heard; but the undaunted bearing of the man, the calm voice and musical flow of pauseless speech, powerful to check unregulated violence by its regulated quietude of utterance, went on, and they could but sit down again. Again and again, from different parts of the room, a man would suddenly spring to his feet and half begin to speak, and then, as if ashamed or awed, subside. There were murmurs, passionate shuffling of feet, a sort of electricity of excitement, which communicated itself from the excited men to every one in the room. At last, when he said, "You have heard of a place called Coward's Castle—Coward's Castle is that pulpit or platform from which a man, surrounded by his friends, in the absence of his opponents, secure of applause, and safe from a reply, denounces those who differ from him," there was a dead stillness. He had struck the thought of the turbulent—the very point on which, in reference to the address, they had enlarged, and from that moment there was not a word, scarcely a cheer, till the last sentence was given. It seemed, said one of them—and what he said was confirmed by others—as if every man in the room were thrilling with the same feelings, as if a magnetic power flowing from the speaker had united them all to himself, and in him to one another. The address was the most remarkable of all his speeches for eloquence, if eloquence be defined as the power of subjugating men by bold and persuasive words. It was

remarkable for two other reasons which may not occur to the ordinary reader. First, in it he revealed much of his inner life and character. He was forced, by the circumstances under which he made the address, to speak of himself. The personal explanations into which he entered were an overt self-revelation. But there was one passage in the address in which, without the knowledge of his hearers, he disclosed the history of the most momentous period of his life. It has been already quoted (p. 87), and is the most important passage in all his works for any one to study who wishes to know what he suffered, and how strongly he emerged from his suffering at the great religious turning-point of his life. Few men thought, as he delivered those magnificent sentences with stern and suppressed emotion, that they were forged in the fire of his own heart. But all did feel that he was disclosing to them the central principle of his whole life, the result of all his past religious struggle, when he spoke the following words: "I refuse to permit discussion this evening respecting the love a Christian man bears to his Redeemer—a love more delicate far than the love which was ever borne to sister, or the adoration with which he regards his God—a reverence more sacred than man ever bore to mother."

This address is also remarkable, because in it he boldly threw down the gauntlet to his opponents. It was not only an address to the working-men, it was an address to the whole of Brighton. Perhaps he did not do this consciously. But those who knew the state of feeling against him which has been described above felt that he was making his apology, not in the sense of a recantation, but in the same sense as Socrates made his apology before the Athenian people. He was out of the pulpit. He could speak more freely. He appeared not so much as the clergyman as the man. It was remarked by more than one that he wore a black cravat. When he said that infidelity was often the cry of narrowness against an old truth under a new and more spiritual form—sometimes the charge caught up at second-hand, and repeated as a kind of religious hue and cry, in profoundest ignorance of the opinions that are so characterized—when he denounced the "religious" newspapers—when he said, "I have learned to hold the mere *charge* of infidelity very cheap"—when he poured pity instead of anathemas on Shelley, because "God was represented to him as a demon, and Christianity as a system of exclusion and bitterness"—when he declared that the existence of God could not be demonstrated to the *understanding*—when he defended himself for having



said that there was "a moral significance in the works of Dickens," and called the objection "cant"—when he spoke of the taunts which he had heard levelled against "his friends the working-men," and his connection with them—when he refused to join in the cry of men, terror-stricken by events upon the Continent, that to instruct the working-men and to side with them was giving sinews to infidelity and socialism—he was in reality appealing to the general public against the private clamor which had been raised against his teaching, and boldly asserting that he stood, undismayed, by his opinions; that, in spite of all, he would not bate one inch, but steer right onward. And as such it was accepted. Many men who had taken up the blind cry against him listened, and went away saying, "That is a true man; a man different from that which I imagined him to be; a man with whom I do not agree, but in the attack against whom I will join no more." The manliness of Brighton, even where it differed most widely from him, was, after that address, always on his side. Nor was the mode in which he made this defense unworthy of himself or of a Christian man. It was daring, determined, but in spirit gentle. Speaking of the suspicion, misrepresentation, and personal dislike he had incurred, he says:

I do not say this in bitterness. I hold it to be a duty to be liberal and generous even to the illiberal and narrow-minded. And it seems to me a pitiful thing for any man to aspire to be true and to speak truth, and then to complain in astonishment that truth has not crowns to give, but thorns; but I say it in order that you and I may understand each other.

The result of the address on the members of the Institute was more successful than he had expected.\* Some of the skeptical minority were convinced that they were wrong; the rest separated in a body, and, carrying off with them a large portion of the library and property, established a new society, which did not long exist. The majority, along with some waverers who were confirmed into truer views of social questions, combined to carry out the views of Mr. Robertson. The first thing done was to rescind the old rule that no gentlemen were to be admitted to vote or act on the committee, and to reconstruct the association on this amended footing; the second was to ask Mr. Robertson to be their new president. The two following letters will show how readily he entered into the difficulties which beset the first, and how wisely he refused the second:

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\* It was published in the "Letters and Addresses."

## No. 1.

I will pledge myself, if your society is formed, and contains in it the elements of vitality, to give either an opening address or a lecture before the close of the year.

But it seems to me a matter of great importance that public attention should not be ostentatiously called again so soon to your efforts at self-restoration, so long as they are only efforts. If the Institute is needed, really craved, and earnestly desired by the working-men, they will enroll themselves in sufficient numbers to insure its existence without the excitement of an address. If they would not without this, then I am sure that to attempt to secure their adhesion by such means would be very dangerous.

On the former occasion nearly seven hundred, in a fit of transient enthusiasm, joined themselves, I believe, and (out of about thirteen hundred) withdrew directly after. If artificial means are necessary to preserve its existence, then the society will soon die a natural death, and we should be again covered with the shame of an abortive attempt. The cause of the working-men can not *afford* this. Better fail silently, than make another public confession of incapacity.

Now an address at present would draw the attention of the town. It would perhaps induce waverers to join, as all public excitement does, and it might secure immediately ready-money. But these are trifles compared with the risk of withdrawal of many soon after. And suppose that enough to support did not join?

Let me propose, therefore: Begin your society as soon and as quietly as possible; that is, as quietly as is consistent with that publicity which is necessary to acquaint the working-men with the fact of a new association being in process of formation. If sufficient members do not present themselves, then the thing quietly dies away till a better opportunity; and be sure that no artificial excitement could have given it permanence, though it might have caused a premature abortive birth.

After some months, if the association lives with internal strength, then we may try external aids. I, for my part, pledge myself as I have said. But the great lesson for us all, in these days of puffing advertisements, is to learn to work silently and truly, and to leave self-advertisement and self-puffing to people who are on the verge of bankruptcy.

## No. 2.

In reply to your letter of this day, I may briefly say that the idea of my accepting the presidentship of the Institute is quite out of the question. I do not consider myself competent for such an office, nor am I sure that it would be to the advantage of the society. \* \* \* I believe I could assist the members more truly, at all events more independently, in a subordinate position. Prominence and power are things for which I have no taste.

I am *very* anxious that there should be no second failure, but I think that the greatest wisdom and experience are needful to prevent it. \* \* \* The working-men have shown that even a right-minded majority is unable to protect itself against a turbulent minority, without the introduction of other elements of society to support them—to support, not dictate; for I should be very sorry to see a majority of gentlemen on the committee. But they want some, of weight and wisdom, to fall back upon. And indeed this is the only true democratic principle, to my mind—not an oligarchy of the poorest, but a fusion of ranks, with such weight allowed, under checks, as is due to superior means of acquiring information.

What grieves me to the heart is to see distrust in the minds of working-men of those wealthier than themselves; and nothing is more mischievous or

unchristian than to gain popularity with them by fostering these feelings, and insinuating that the clergy and the religious and the rich are their enemies, or only espouse their cause for an end.

I must not accept any high office: I am their friend, but I want nothing from them—not even influence, nor their praise.

If I can do them even a little good, well; but for their sakes I must not take any thing which could leave on one of their minds the shadow of a shade of a suspicion of my motives.

The society, after working admirably for some years, has lately, to the great regret of many, been closed for want of support. It does not appear, after Mr. Robertson's death, to have been taken up by any person, with the exception of Mr. Ross, outside of the actual sphere of the working-men.

After the delivery of the above-mentioned address, Mr. Robertson did not appear in public, except in the pulpit, for many months.

The end of 1850 is celebrated for the mistake which the Church of Rome made, and for the short and foolish blaze of excitement kindled by it in England. The mistake of the Church of Rome was in departing from the quiet method of conversion they had been using. The foolishness of the English people was in making a great noise, only to end in the pretentious nonentity of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. Brighton was, of course, convulsed. Platforms and pulpits rang with a jangle of denunciations. The only man who seems to have kept his head was Mr. Robertson. His speech at the "great meeting" was a model of good sense and calm knowledge; a quiet protest against what he called, with fine irony and with accurate acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, "an act of schism on the part of the Church of Rome." What he thought privately of the whole matter will be found in the following extracts:

This foolish act of the Pope has made Protestants nearly beside themselves with terror. Already they see the fires of Smithfield lighted, thumb-screws at work, and the "mystery" of the Apocalypse throned at Canterbury. We have a great meeting here on Thursday, to which I look forward, only expecting a vast deal of foolish talking, and perhaps recrimination, banded back against the Church of England. Here have the bishops been coquetting with semi-Popery for fifteen years, but the moment it assumes an attitude invasive of their spiritual privileges, "the right reverend fathers in God" rise as one man, the noble champions of the faith, and, much as they dislike controversial preaching, recommend all their clergy to preach, disseminate tracts, etc., against the "mother of abominations," and so forth. On Sunday I could not help saying, at the end of my sermon, "I have purposely abstained from entering on the subject upon which the public mind is nearly frantic; I could easily have roused your indignation and inflamed passions, but for myself I do not like that kind of work. Assume, if you will, in the week, the attitude of defiance; but let us, for one Sabbath-day, keep free from that, and tak-

the attitude of humiliation." The subject of the sermon was, "I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

Thursday.

To-day was spent in a long-protracted meeting at the Town Hall on the subject of the Papal division of England into dioceses; it was crammed to the window-sills. I went determined not to say a word; but, after two persons had spoken, several voices called out my name: this was repeated so often, becoming clamorous at last, that at the close of the day, in an evil hour, I rose. I heartily wish now I had not, for I was unprepared, and hampered, partly by seeing a Romanist there, a former friend, for whom my heart winced at every severe expression, and partly from disagreement with the words of the address. Afterwards I had a long conversation with M—— (discussion, rather), which lasted until two or three in the morning. At last I said, "Now, M——, it is not often one man lets another see the core of his heart: I do not mean to let you see mine, but I have told you much of my views. You know what I do not believe, and what I do. You would call my creed meagre; I call it large, for there are many points on which I am in perplexity. What I believe, I believe strongly. You have heard me preach, too. You saw that crowd; you know what it costs me to address them; now tell me, as an old friend, would you advise me to go on or retire?" He said, with enthusiasm, "I do not hesitate one moment; go on. I tell you frankly there were points in your sermon I did not quite agree with. I wished the evangelical element had been there; but I felt, if it were only there—no, I can not tell you what I feel, for it would look like extravagant flattery. I will only say I felt it would be a glorious thing for a man to stand up as you stand in a place like Brighton; but never mind, perhaps it is better as it is. Men come to hear you who would not come if you thought as I do." I verily believe that if M—— had only said "Retire," I should have retired forthwith.

The year closed for him heavily. His health had visibly decayed. He suffered keenly, though he denied it, from the loneliness of his position. A gloom deepened over his heart. But now and then a gleam of happiness shot across his spirit when he learned that he had done some good to a human soul. Two letters which touched him greatly are inserted here; they complete the history of this period:

*An Anonymous Letter, inclosing a Present of 10s.*

REV. SIR,—A humble individual begs the acceptance of the inclosed as an Easter offering, and as a grateful acknowledgment in some sort for the many wise lessons he has received of truth, honor, charity, and love, and for the hope of immortality with which he is *now* impressed, which has begotten a cheerfulness of mind to which for years he has been a stranger.

May God in His infinite mercy long spare you to us in health and prosperity, and bless you, is the sincere wish of, faithfully yours,

THE WRITER.

*An Anonymous Letter, accompanying a Pair of Candlesticks, the Work of the Writer.*

SIR,—A humble individual, desirous of acknowledging the *unflinching* kindness you have shown towards the working-classes of this town, begs the acceptance of the inclosed; and, in doing so, he hopes you will pardon what I am afraid you will think an un-English way of sending a note without a name. My apology must be, that as you do not know me, you will not put

any wrong construction as to my motive in doing so. Nothing but the profoundest respect would have induced me to take the liberty I have.

Believing you to be a *man* as well as a gentleman, that you can come down to the level of working-men, and *understand* them (a rare qualification nowadays in one in the class that circumstances have placed you), all working-men think it so much the more valuable to have your advice and assistance. May it long be continued!

I do not complain that we have not the sympathy of the upper classes. I believe we have; but there is not one in fifty that can come down to our circumstances, to the bond of our common nature—to comprehend that although the mechanic and the artisan of this country are deep thinkers, yet they often stand in need of advice and the assistance that education gives. We have their good wishes and pecuniary assistance—thanks for it—but sometimes a little kindly advice would do far more. It is this difference that makes us feel we could grasp you by the hand as a brother in the cause of progress of the nation. Would that there were more such! How much more would true religion, morals, and sound intellect be brought out! No fear then of the Pope or the devil.

Believe me, sir, I am very respectfully yours.

*Letters from October, 1849, to December, 1850.*

XXXIX.

October 17, 1849.

I have just finished "Feats on the Fiord." Miss Martineau's graphic powers are uncommon. I seem to see a fiord, like a valley spread with water into the land; the vast flocks of wild fowl; the sun only dipping in summer below the horizon; the outline of the reindeer on the mountain cut against the sky, and the Lapp slyly running off with the cheese laid on the mountain-ridge as an offering to Nipen. A Lapp's hut must, I think, resemble an alp for filth, and be somewhat like it altogether. An alp is a Tyrolese herdsman's hut. On the mountains there are patches of vegetation among the pine-forests; these in winter are covered with snow, but in the summer months afford pasture for cattle. The herdsmen ascend, having under their charge the cows of several lowland farmers. Each superintends the cattle of many farms. They milk them, make cheese, and at the end of the season each farmer receives a number of cheeses, in proportion to the number of cows that he contributes. I never knew what filth was until I tried to breakfast, when chamois-hunting, in an alp. I had taken bread with me, and endeavored to improve it by the addition of cream, butter, and cheese; but the room was nearly ankle-deep in dirt, the human beings in it scarcely tolerable within six yards; the cream black and white in about equal proportions, from the soot which had fallen in; the butter kneaded up with hair, as mortar sometimes is; and the cheese yielded to scarcely any thing less violent than a hatchet. I fancy the four-feet-high Lapps would feel quite at home in an alp.

What I like in Miss Martineau, too, is her genial heart—her willingness to "live and let live." She feels the falsehood and the injury of religious superstitions. She has no false sentiment about their romantic beauty. They take the manhood from the breast, the self-reliance and the trust in God—leaving behind a restless attempt to propitiate fickle, capricious, malicious beings, whose only superiority lies in power. The worship of power singly is always a degrading worship; submission to caprice is always demoralizing—submission producing trickiness, subtlety, and trust in cunning rather than in rectitude. All this Miss Martineau sees; yet, whether it be heathen

or Christian superstition, she nearly always has a healthy and just allowance for the necessary admixture of error with all that is human, and sees that not by anathemas, but by gradual enlightenment, such errors are to be expelled. In short, she sees the difference between pernicious error and willful vice.

I began that book at sunrise, and finished it a little after breakfast-time. It gave me a healthy glow of feeling, a more cheerful view of life. I believe the writer of that book would rejoice that she had soothed and invigorated one day of a wayworn, tired being in his path to the still country, where the heaviest-laden lays down his burden at last, and has rest.

Yet, thank God! there is rest—many an interval of saddest, sweetest rest—even here, when it seems as if evening breezes from that other land, laden with fragrance, played upon the cheeks and lulled the heart. There are times, even on the stormy sea, when a gentle whisper breathes softly as of heaven, and sends into the soul a dream of ecstasy which can never again wholly die, even amidst the jar and whirl of waking life. How such whispers make the blood stop and the very flesh creep with a sense of mysterious communion! How singularly such moments are the epochs of life—the few points that stand out prominently in the recollection after the flood of years has buried all the rest, as all the low shore disappears, leaving only a few rock-points visible at high tide!

## XL.

October 18, 1849.

I have been pondering over your question as to the probable effect of tragedies such as "*Phèdre*," etc., upon the mind. Now Aristotle's deep view of the end of the tragic drama is this: that it aims, through the medium of two feelings which it represents in action—terror and fear—to refine those very feelings in the spectators. To refine, of course, means to take off the rudeness and painfulness of such emotions, and make them almost pleasing sensations. That is, the terrible and pathetic in real life are painful things to witness; but in the mimic representation the worst part is taken away by the consciousness that it is unreal, at the same time that it is sufficiently like life to produce an impression somewhat similar to that which would be called forth by reality. The feeling thus made faint becomes pleasurable, just as warmth is enjoyment, though heat be intolerable. Of course it is plain that this refinement of feeling unrealizes it, unfits for the contemplation of the terrible and pathetic in real life, substitutes the mimic emotion which is useless—a merely artificial production—for the true one which the Creator has appointed to rise in the bosom in such circumstances for the express purpose of leading to action, exciting sympathy, hardening against danger, and so on. A person who is refined by high-wrought scenes in novels is necessarily sure to shrink from such scenes in real life, because in the mimic case he had all the excitement without the pain, and he will turn aside from circumstances where excitement can not be had without pain. And such a one is sure to be found wanting when true feeling is required for use, because the feelings have got the habit of being roused, without leading to exertion. They have got this habit in the unreal, and they will keep to it in the real. They will rise at the sight of distress or pain, but they have never been trained to pass promptly into the work of sympathizing and relieving; and accordingly such persons seem and come to be looked upon as callous amidst the trials of others over which they wept in the romance. This, I fancy, is Aristotle's "refinement" of feeling, and this must be the danger in all refinement of society. The tragedy and the romance, therefore, only begin to appear when the mind of a large portion of the nation is at leisure to cultivate hot-house feelings, which are always feeble monstrosities. The bull-fight and the amphitheatre only begin when war and the chase have ended. The emotions which found in these a healthy exercise once, get their unhealthy repast by seeing without any call for acting.

It is plain to me that in this way all such reading is injurious to the generality. All the feeling we can command we want for acting. When we come to act, the feeling is not there to make acting easy; and what we have to do we must either leave undone, or do with a cold heart, simply from having been accustomed to train the feelings to refinement, and not to action.

I wish that nature could do her own healthy work upon all our hearts. I could conceive a marvellously healing power to come from opening the soul like a child's, to receive spontaneously, without effort, the impressions of the unliving—and yet how living!—world around us with all the awe that accompanies them.

One impulse from a vernal wood  
Will teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Also I suspect that speculative philosophy is not good to read, however interesting; at all events, not alone. It has too little of a basis of proved fact to rest upon, and depends for its truth too much upon feeling. Positive science, such as chemistry, natural philosophy, mineralogy, and geology, rests on facts, and the effect of certainty which it produces on the mind is always a healthy feeling. Here, again, it is as I said above. The cure is to come in contact with Nature and with Fact, instead of exhausting strength by mighty blows struck at random on the yielding air, in the region of conjecture and bewildering mystery. I love that region; it is indeed the region of Faith, but it requires a brain practised much on more earthly precipices to avoid being dizzy and lost in the immense abyss.

## XLI.

October 19.

I am convinced there is a deep truth in the strict view which many take of the observance of Sunday. I am *certain* that their arguments are wrong: that the Sabbath is not a perpetual obligation; that it was Jewish, and that it passed away with Christianity, which made all days and places holy.

Nevertheless, I am more and more sure by experience that the reason for the observance of the Sabbath lies deep in the everlasting necessities of human nature; and that as long as man is man, the blessedness of keeping it, not as a day of rest only, but as a day of spiritual rest, will never be annulled. Almost every thing may become an object of doubt; but, in the midst of a wilderness of shadows, broken and distorted in every way, of one thing I am certain: one thing is real—the life of God in the soul of man. I am quite sure that there is One who is seeking us rather than sought by us, that He will seek and find the earnest; and I am sure that this hidden communion may become an object of actual experience as soon as the seeking is reciprocal. If I have not yet acted on it, I know that not with the intellect, but with the spirit, man finds God; in other words, by that which is allied to God in our souls we touch Him. The Jews required “a sign,” that is, something that would prove God to their sensuous nature. The Greeks sought after wisdom; that is, by reason and mental tension they expected to realize the Divine; but St. Paul's conviction was, that the spiritual man alone—that is, the man who sought with his spirit—could understand the things of God. By the spirit, I suppose, he means that which I called above the part in our nature which is allied to God, which shows itself, not in cleverness and nimbleness of apprehension, but in devotion, in the submissive heart, in gentleness, humbleness, and love. I fancy that Sunday has lost its meaning unless this part of our being is called into energy. I have been beating the air in vain with investigation. The true way was much nearer. Not by soaring high or diving low do we get the Anointer, but by something very near to

us—trusting. Is not that the substance of those verses which so many people find difficult, Romans x. 6, 7, 8, 9?

I could not quite satisfy myself with the desolate feeling which instinctively I feel as often as you talk of resolving to fix your heart on God alone. Is not this that which ought to make me supremely happy? But as I was walking in the town to-day in a back street and musing over this, I detected the reason of it not doing so at once. God is life, not death: He is not to be found, as the legion-haunted tried to find Him, among the tombs. I do think that the spirit in which you sometimes despondingly speak of living for Him alone, really means nothing more than the burial alive of a nun who is taking the black veil, and thinking to become thus the spouse of Christ. You speak of living for God and with God, as if it were dying to all that is bright, and cheering, and beautiful, and blessed. You speak as one would speak of going into a parish union, which is good only when there is nothing else to do. No wonder that, involuntarily and almost without a distinct analysis of the feeling, I feel a kind of shudder and a vague cheerlessness when you talk so. No; be *vouée* if you will, but it must be *au blanc*, with more cheerful and more grateful tones—not as if to serve God and to hear the eternal prison-doors clank behind you were identical. Serve Him, love Him, live to Him, and you will be bright, and full of hope, and noble. “They shall renew their strength.” The heart vainly pants “for some celestial fruit, forbidden to our wants.” Yes, but how unjust and unreasonable to complain if our expectations are not fulfilled! A sailor, I fancy, would not have a right to count himself of a superior order of beings, if he sat dripping on a rock, and pined for wings instead of sails. Sails are not so swift as wings, and are much more coarse; but there is nothing for it but to patiently content himself with his limitations, and humbly follow in the wake of the laws of nature, making such use of wind and steam as the constitution of his being permits, and not look up envying the sea-birds in the air. That will not get him on many knots an hour, I fancy. And besides, even with wings, *they* will live and die gulls; whereas the very limits that cramp *him* call out the energies of a day-by-day diviner manhood.

#### XLII.

MY DEAR —,—A woman’s position is one of subjection, mythically described as a curse in the Book of Genesis. Well, but I ween that all curses are blessings in disguise. Labor among thorns and thistles—man’s best health. Woman’s subjection? What say you to His? “Obedient,” a “servant;” *wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him. Methinks a thoughtful, high-minded woman would scarcely feel degraded by a lot which assimilates her to the divinest Man: “He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” I have always conceived that you had learned to count that ministry the sublimest life which the world has seen, and its humiliation and subjection precisely the features which were most divine. The Greeks at Corinth wanted that part to be left out, and it was exactly that part which Paul would not leave out—Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ *crucified*, which the Evangelicals rob of all its beauty. Trust me, a noble woman laying on herself the duties of her sex while fit for higher things, the world has nothing to show more like the Son of Man than that. Do you remember Wordsworth’s beautiful lines to Milton?

Thy soul was as a star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life’s common way,  
In cheerful godliness: *and yet thy heart*  
*The lowliest duties on itself did lay.*

I do not know any thing of Alfieri’s “Life.” By whom is it written?



The misfortunes of genius, its false direction, its misery, I suppose rise partly from the fact of the life of genius being that which is chiefly given to the world. Many a soldier died as bravely and with as much suffering as Sir John Moore at Corunna, but every soldier had not a Wolfe to write his death-song. Many an innocent victim perished—yes, by hundreds of thousands—on the scaffolds of France, and in the dungeons of the robber-barons, but they died silently. A few aristocrats whose shriek was loud have filled the world with pity at the tale of their suffering. Many a mediocre boy have I seen spoiled at school, many a commonplace destiny has been marred in life, only these things are not matters of history. Peasants grow savage with domestic troubles, and washerwomen pine under brutal treatment; but the former are locked up for burying their misery in drunkenness, the latter die of a broken heart, with plenty of unwritten poetry lost among the soapsuds. I fancy the *inarticulate* sorrows are far more pitiable than those of an Alfieri, who has a tongue to utter them. Carlyle in this respect seems to me to hold a tone utterly diverse from that of the Gospel. The worship of the hero, that is his religion, condescension to the small and unknown, that was His!

A little plan which I have found serviceable in past years is to put down every night the engagements and duties of the next day, arranging the hours well. The advantages of this are several. You get more done than if a great part of each day is spent in contriving and considering "what next?" A healthful feeling pervades the whole of life. There is a feeling of satisfaction at the end of the day on finding that, generally, the greater part of what is planned has been accomplished. This is the secret of giving dignity to trifles. As units they are insignificant; they rise in importance when they become parts of a plan. Besides this—and I think the most important thing of all—there is gained a consciousness of Will, the opposite of that which is the sense of impotency. The thought of time, to me at least, is a very overpowering and often a very annihilating one for energy: Time rushing on, unbroken, irresistible, hurrying the worlds and the ages into being, and out of it, and making our "noisy years seem moments in the *being* of the eternal Silence." The sense of powerlessness which this gives is very painful. But I have felt that this is neutralized by such a little plan as that. You feel that you do control your own course; you are borne on, but not resistlessly. Down the rapids you go, certainly, but you are steering and trimming your own raft, and making the flood of Time your vassal, and not your conqueror. I first, I think, began this plan after reading a valuable little book, and a sunny, cheerful one, Abbott's "Way to do Good." It has been omitted for years, but I have begun it again these last few days.

"There is nothing in the drudgery of domestic duties to soften"—you quote that. No, but a great deal to strengthen with the sense of duty done, self-control and power. Besides, you can not calculate how much corroding rust is *kept off*—how much of disconsolate, dull despondency is hindered. Daily use is not the jeweller's mercurial polish; but it will keep your little silver pencil from tarnishing.

I have been interrupted by the visit of a lady of my congregation, who came to take leave; one, it appears, who has been warmly attached to the instruction given there. She told me the delight, the tears of gratitude, which she had witnessed in a poor girl to whom, in passing, I gave a kind look on going out of church on Sunday. What a lesson! How cheaply happiness can be given! What opportunities we miss of doing an angel's work! I remember doing it, full of sad feelings, passing on, and thinking no more about it; and it gave an hour's sunshine to a human life, and lightened the load of life to a human heart—for a time!

## XLIII.

October 24.

I have just returned from Lady G——'s—a party of ten or twelve to dinner. Conversation after, chiefly military, turning on Indian battles; so I talked. Afterwards had a discussion with Mr. —— about the post-office regulation of transmitting letters on Sunday, in opposition to which there is to be a meeting to-morrow. I maintained the difficulty of the question: he asserted its facility. I instanced the case of my being thrown out for the last train on Saturday night; what would have been done had there been no train on Sunday morning? The inestimable value of a day of physical repose and spiritual rest is granted; but the details of that must be modified by circumstances. Sailors must work a ship on Sundays; ships must arrive on Sundays; battles must be fought; news must travel. Life and death, or—what is equivalent—property to an immense amount, must often be involved, if the business of a great country, and much of the correspondence, receives a sudden shock in the metropolis and all country towns. Two days in the week there would be no delivery. Moreover, it is a matter of degree. The question is not an easy one. For, on the other hand, the compulsory working of so many thousands on the day of rest is almost identical with smothering the life of religion in the soul. I certainly do feel by experience the eternal obligation because of the eternal necessity of the Sabbath. The soul withers without it; it thrives in proportion to the fidelity of its observance. Nay, I even believe the stern rigor of the Puritan Sabbath had a grand effect upon the soul. Fancy a man thrown in upon himself, with no permitted music, nor relaxation, nor literature, nor secular conversation—nothing but his Bible, his own soul and God's silence! What hearts of iron this system must have made. How different from our stuffed-arm-chair religion and "gospel of comfort!" as if to be made comfortable were the great end of religion. I am persuaded, however, that the Sabbath must rest not on an enactment, but on the necessities of human nature. It is necessary not because it is commanded; but it is commanded because it is necessary. If the Bible says, "Eat the herb of the field," self-sustenance does not become a duty in consequence of the enactment, but the enactment is only a statement of the law of human nature. And so with the Sabbath, and this appears to be a truer and a far more impregnable base to place it on. For as to the enactment, great part of it is indisputably dispensed with. The day, the mode of observance, the manner of computing the twenty-four hours from twelve to twelve, or from sunset to sunset. If these be ceremonial, who is to prove that the number one in seven is not ceremonial too, and that it might not be changed for one in ten? If all this is got rid of, and "no manner of work" is construed to permit hot dinners and fly-driving on the Sabbath, then it is only an arbitrary distinction to call any other part, or even the whole of it, of moral and eternal instead of ceremonial obligation. You can not base it on a law; but you can show that the law was based on an eternal fitness. There I think it never can be dislodged.

## XLIV.

I have been dining at Mr. E——'s, and escaped at 9 20; a pleasant party enough; that is, there were a good many intelligent men, and the conversation was of a better order than usual. Mr. E—— remarked, in conversation, that our Lord never once used irony. I alleged Mark vii. 9: "Full *well* ye reject," etc., which, after a long discussion, and the production of Greek Testaments, etc., was universally admitted to be decisive. Then came the maxim, that the indignation expressed by Him against hypocrisy was no precedent for us, inasmuch as he spoke as a Divine person. A gentleman of the name of —— maintained this. I contended that it was human, and that if a

man did not feel something of the same spirit under similar circumstances, if his blood could not boil with indignation, nor the syllable of withering justice rise to his lips, he could not even conceive His spirit. Mr. E—— agreed to this, to my surprise, and told an anecdote. “Could you not have felt indignation for that, Robertson?” My blood was at the moment running fire—not at his story, however; and I remembered that I had once in my life stood before my fellow-creature with words that scathed and blasted; once in my life I felt a terrible might: I knew, and rejoiced to know, that I was inflicting the sentence of a coward’s and a liar’s hell.

I feel most as I should be when my mind is in the attitude of—do you remember the dear old simile of Shelley—which I have not quoted for so long, though it has been again and again in my meditations—that I used to quote so often? There is something in the feeling of that simile that is quite after my own heart: the solemn night, the purity of the thread of light, the divine compassion of the placid Thing above, the quiet, devoted sadness of the solitary inhabitant of night and air below, a butterfly in all but gaudiness. No, I have not given the serene feeling and sacred sensations of the simile. It is quite peculiar, and I have repeated it to myself a thousand times. Resignation was the word I wanted. The homage of resignation beneath the clear pale sky of night, with Eternity and Immensity all round, imparting themselves to the look upward. It is all in vain, I do not express it. Shelley’s single line says it all. The sound of the words responds to the thought and image which they suggest. I can not tell you what a stillness they produce in me, and how entirely, more than any thing I know, they *image* what I feel.

I have been asked to go to Switzerland, and a man ought to go there to feel intensely at least once in his life. The only question is, it will scarcely be possible for me to exceed seven Sundays of absence.

I fear it is not possible, but what a dream! The valley of Rosenlauri, that loveliest of earthly spots; the stern grandeur of the Grimsel, where the wildest and loneliest thoughts were in my heart four years ago; and the fall of the Aar at Handek, where I got a sensation new in life; or the spots of the Tyrol, where I wandered for long weeks alone. For a time I almost think I would give up the rest of the year, any thing for that. But, no; a few weeks soon pass, though they leave behind a memory which tints all existence, and apparently absorb all existence into themselves.

#### XLV.

MY DEAR ——,—I implore you, do not try morphine ever; no, not once. I will trust you not to do so, not to take any opiate whatever. I ask it humbly. Pledge me your word that you will honorably comply with this, in the letter and in the spirit too. It is a wicked and cowardly attempt to rule the spirit by the flesh. It is beneath you. If you do it I can honor you no longer; the results upon the system are slow, sure, and irreparable, and the habit grows until it is unconquerable. I am deeply, anxiously in earnest. You are not worthy the fidelity of my friendship if you try to drown misery that way. Except in the grossness of the effect, where is the difference between the opiate and the dram? Do you not know what keeps the gin palaces open?—Misery! The miserable go there to forget. You must not, and shall not do it, for it is degradation. I would have you condescend to no miserable materialism to escape your sorrow. Remember what Maria Theresa said when she began to doze in dying, “I want to meet my God awake.” Remember that He refused the medicated opiate on the cross. Meet misery awake. May I borrow sacred words?—“Having begun in the spirit, do not be made perfect through the flesh.” Summon the force to bear out of your own heart, and the divine that dwells there—not out of a laudanum-bottle. I have spoken ruggedly, but not rudely. Forgive me; I am not myself to-night; I would

gladly sustain the depression I feel by an opiate, or by any thing else; but I resist, because it is despicable.

## XLVI.

Another Sunday done: crowded congregations, pulpit steps even full, ante-room nearly so. Morning, the Sabbath subject; the afternoon, the conclusion of Acts xviii. I sat in church, thinking, "Now, how this crowd would give many men pleasure, flatter their hearts with vanity, or fill them with honest joy! How strange that it is given to one who can not enjoy it, who takes no pains to keep it, who would gladly give all up, and feels himself in the midst of all a homeless and heartless stranger!" In the afternoon, for a few minutes, gentler thoughts came, and there was a rush of warmer, perhaps better feeling in some parts of my sermon, where I was speaking of Apollo's character—brilliant and gifted, yet sitting humbly to be taught by Priscilla; and also where St. Paul, taking a vow, seemed to indicate that there was in his heart a lingering attachment to the ceremonies, and even the superstitions, hallowed by early associations.

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— has been here since eight o'clock. He had been reading Fichte's "Blessed Life." We had a long talk about it; he is but a beginner in these matters, but was deeply interested. I will tell you a thought which came out in conversation, and which I expressed. Fichte seems to discountenance attachment to the individual and the visible. The clinging which to cut away would be cutting the heart to the quick, he would call an indication of a mind not set on the Invisible. And yet how is this? Then they who feel least, and attach themselves least, are the religious of the earth. The gentlest and tenderest, who have forgotten self in the being of another, are consoled with the pleasing assurance, that "they have neither part nor lot" in the blessed life. And He, whose tears flowed so freely over the grave of friendship, and over his country's doomed metropolis, who loved John with so peculiar and selective an attachment—what are we to say of Him? Oh! it can not be. It can not be, that God has given us beings here to love, and that to love them intensely is idolatry. I can understand self-annihilation for another dearer than self; but I can not understand the annihilation of those dear affections, nor the sacrifice of a bleeding heart at the shrine of Him whose name is Love. I do not, however, comprehend any thing of the matter. It is all dark. I do not understand why the tenderer the heart is, the more it is exposed to be torn, and rent, and tortured. Separations, bereavements, deaths, broken hearts—there is something very stern in the aspect of this world, when you penetrate below the superficial smile it wears—very stern, and every day makes life a more *serious* thing, more suggestive of grave thought. Then, the next moment there is, perhaps, a burst of light-heartedness, unworthy of one who thinks and feels; but here again Elena's lay in "Philip Van Artevelde" gives the true account of that:

The human heart can not sustain, etc.

And that very provision for happiness or lightness, in spite of such serious thought, seems to give us glimpses of the truth that Love sits at the helm of this dark world's course, after all. Else Talleyrand's hideous sneer might be almost believed: "the happy are they who have hard hearts, and hard—" how shall I euphonize it?—"peptic powers."

## XLVII.

I rather agree with the view of St. Paul having taken, personally, a low estimate of women. It seems to me inseparable from his temperament. I had a friend full of fire and ardor like St. Paul, though wanting his tender-

ness, who was blessed or unblessed with the same gift as St. Paul, and he spoke in the same way—not contemptuously, for he liked to be soothed and flattered by them—but as if they were born to be helpmeets for man, and that chiefly. That respectful chivalry of feeling which characterizes some men can only exist where that is found which St. Paul lacked, and which was in many respects a gift; still no man can lack any one of the feelings of humanity, however much misery he may escape by it, without loss in some other respect. It is a matter of great interest, and even awe to me, to observe how the nobler feelings can exist in their intensity only where the whole nature, the lower too, is intense also; and how that which is in itself low and mean becomes sublimated into something that is celestial. Hence, in the highest natures I suppose goodness will be the result of tremendous struggle; just as the “bore,” which is nothing in the Thames, becomes a convulsion on the Ganges, where the waters of a thousand miles roll like a sea to meet the incoming tide of the ocean.

I never, however, could reconcile that coldness of nature in St. Paul with the singular fire and passion of his character, nor with his remarkable and exuberant tenderness. Men are divided into three classes—the irascible or passionate temperament, the sensual, and the melancholy. St. Paul belonged to the first, which is no doubt the finest, and, on the whole, the happiest.

Poor —! The secret, however, of his skepticism seems to have been crime; or was the crime the result of skepticism? for when the soul is tossed over *that* sea, without a chart, and without a polar star, it is almost at the mercy of any fitful gust of passion. I can not blame severely what others so condemn—the bitterness of that sarcasm in the —. People often mistake a contortion of anguish for a diabolical grin. Often the cry of despair is taken for a shout of savage triumph; many a brave man, and tender withal, has struck a woman ruthlessly her death-blow. Yes, but then the man was drowning. No one can understand the horrid laugh of hopelessness which delights to scatter its scorn on the falsehoods which are deluding others, after they are proved falsehoods, but he who has felt the ice of doubt cracking beneath his feet, and seen himself alone on a single ice-block, severed from mankind. I do not excuse, but I can understand both the want of reverence and the immoral life which result from such despair.

## XLVIII.

October.

MY DEAR —,—I know little of the Countess Hahn Hahn or Frederica Bremer, but I can easily understand that the female character is very different in those places from here. Tennyson, I remember, in his “Princess,” which I have not in my possession to refer to, but shall get to-day, draws the distinction well between the characters of the north and south:

Oh, swallow, swallow, swallow flying south.

“Dark, tender, true,” I think, are the epithets he applies to the north:

And dark and true and tender is the north.

The south, of course, passionate, impulsive, brief-lived in feeling. I believe the former makes the nobler character. At least, it has been given to the north again and again to regenerate the worn-out south by the infusion of nobler blood and more vigorous intellect. In the estimate formed of woman, I should think there can not be a doubt which is the truer and deeper—that which makes her a plaything, or that which surrounds her with the sacredness of a silent worship. A temperament like that of St. Paul’s is happier, and for the world more useful. \* \* \*

Still I think that tone of mind, which could only be found in the north,

only confers the power of suffering—dignified suffering, if you will, but only suffering. In one or two cases here and there you meet with those “whose hearts the holy forms of young imagination have kept pure.” But commonly, I believe, the very purity of these aspirations becomes a dangerous gift. They lie very close to what is wrong, they transform themselves very easily into tempters—Lucifers cast down from heaven. Tenderness transmutes itself into something allied, yet different; disappointment becomes heart ruin. Do you remember in the “Arabian Nights” the story of the princess gifted with supernatural power—using it always nobly—blowing flames of fire at the genie, and reduced to a heap of ashes in the conflict by her own fire the very moment after victory? It is all very mysterious. The sons of dust crawl plodding on in safety to their journey’s end; and they who aspire to guide the fire coursers of the sun, or float through heaven on wings of waxen purity, are precipitated into ruin, or else left in cold dank seas of disappointment.

## XLIX.

October 30.

Walking down Regency Square, about four o’clock, I was struck by the singular beauty of the sky. Two mighty continents of cloud stretched from above me in parallel lines towards the horizon above the sea, where they seemed to meet. A river of purest blue, broad above my head, narrow by perspective in the distance, ran between them, seeming to lave their shores. Each of them had a rim or edge of bright gold, as if the river were rippling and glistening on the banks; and innumerable islets of gold were dotted along both shores; the parallelism of them, producing that effect of perspective which you see in an avenue of trees, gave a strong perception of the boundlessness of the distance into which they stretched away. Looking at sky and clouds, you scarcely estimate distance. The vault seems very measurable, and it does not occur to you that clouds which appear only a few yards in length are really acres and acres of vapor. This combination of forms, however, forced me to realize the immensity of space, and a deeper sense of grandeur and loveliness came to me than I have felt for many weeks. It has always been so. When I have not *perfect* union with humanity, I find in trees and clouds, and forms and colors of things inanimate, more that is congenial, more that I can inform with my own being, more that speaks to me—than in my own species. There is something in the mere posture of looking up which gives a sense of grandeur; and that, I suppose, is the reason why all nations have localized heaven there, and peopled the sky with Deity.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have received a letter from ——— to-day. It is full of hope and touching in all its misery! Her sorrows have been great, and her trials are severe. She has attempted to find peace in the patristic system, which she recommends to me, but it is quite plain that she has tried it in vain. I replied that I knew the system pretty well, having studied it once with anxiety; that I doubted not it had in it a remedy for those who could believe it; that I was not prepared to say that to them it was not a real remedy, for the form of error often conceals a truth, and to many minds presents the truth only, the wrapping being instinctively rejected, as the grape-skin or sugar-cane fibre is rejected by the palate when the sweetness of which they are but the vehicle has been extracted; that even of the worst of Romish errors the same might be said, as, for instance, Mariolatry contains the sublime truth of the adorableness and heavenliness of female purity. But that no act of volition could extract this nutriment from error when the conscience recognized it as error; that to adopt a system because others who believed it earnestly have had their spiritual nature nurtured by it; to believe it for the sake of the advan-

tage of it, must fail; that it would be destruction to the moral being; that I would rather live solitary on the most desolate crag—shivering, with all the warm wraps of falsehood stripped off, gazing after unfound truth—where “bird doth not find bush, nor insect wing flit over the herbless granite”—than sit comfortably on more inhabited spots, where others are warm in a faith which is true to them, but which is false to me. I said this to her more concisely in a few lines.

\* \* \* \* \*

I went out this afternoon to get some fresh air, and cool a little feverishness. After a walk I bent my steps to the spot most congenial to my feelings at that time, the church-yard at Hove. It was quite dark, but the moon soon rose and shed a quiet light upon the long church and the white tombstones. I went in, and was pleased to hear not a single human sound far or near. The moon was rising, like glowing copper, through the smoke at Brighton. Above there were a few dense clouds, edged with light, sailing across a marvellous blue, which softened towards the zenith into a paler and more pearly cobalt, with clear innocent stars here and there looking down so chaste and pure. I heard nothing but the sea; that, however, very distinctly, chanting no “sea-psalm,” but falling with a most dissonant, heavy, endless clang upon the shore. It found for me the expression I could not put in words.

I went to the tomb, and stood beside it quietly for some time. I felt no bitterness—infinite pity and tenderness—that was predominant. I did not kneel to pray; I do not know why. I passed E. M——’s tomb, and paused one moment. The bridegroom lies beneath the hillock where so many fell at Chillianwallah; the bride is desolate. Two who were there are dead, both young. That marriage and that death are singularly joined in my mind, for poor E—— was planning her own wedding then, and settling that I should marry her. Young R——, too, has gone; but I do not envy any of them, except the soldier, perhaps. I wish I had been with my own gallant, wondrous regiment in that campaign.

L.

November 5.

Keble on this occasion is scarcely equal to himself.\* The connection is forced. The mountain-boy, getting hardened by years, is very indistinctly linked with the thought of unforgiveness; nor do I see why a mountain-boy is peculiarly called upon for the exercise of that grace. Besides, the “blest restraint” is not one calculated at all to produce any real elevation of character. It is little more than an animal existence, and all those notions of peasant purity and pastoral innocence are miserably false and sentimental. They belong rather to the heathen times of Corydon and Amaryllis than the more true Christian conception of a new birth into goodness and progressive excellence by knowledge of evil and hatred of it. If the mountain-boy had lived in that narrow “blessed range” all his life, I suspect his perception of the beauty of the “snow-clad peaks of rosy light” would have been very dim and dull indeed. It is education which draws out the beauty of these things. I fancy my little Charles would see more beauty in his regiment of leaden soldiers than in the sublimest view in Switzerland.

Oh, lady, we receive but what we give,  
And in our life alone does nature live.

A child’s glance on nature is void of rapture, unless, by some unfortunate precocity of constitution, feeling is very early developed; especially a boy’s glance, to whom a beautiful hill is rather a fine place for a scamper or a good

\* Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.

cover for grouse, than a place for sensibility to expatiate in. The sense of the loveliness of nature comes with the first susceptibility of the spell of woman. I have little doubt that the "thwarting cliffs" were never called by so poetical a name as "thwarting" by the young gentleman of the hills, until he found his rudeness checked by the vigorous chastisement of Peggy's delicate fingers making his ears tingle. "Altered day-dreams;" why, the dreams of boyhood are nothing to the dreams of manhood. The mysteries of this unintelligible world, and the solemn beauty and wonder of existence, do not begin in their fullness until the heart has begun to lose itself in "life's seducing wild."

\* \* \* \* \*

I do not quite know what to say about Carlyle. Sure I am that his mind has had more influence on the thoughtful young men of the day than any other I could name. His thought is more moulded into many of the leading Americans' thought, and his power has told more upon the tone of feeling amongst the most highly educated manufacturers than that of any, I suppose, in England; and I am not prepared to think that that is an attribute of mere talent. Formative influence is a prerogative of genius; but the truth is, that talent, at least, often becomes nearly as intuitive as genius. When the mind is stored with a vast variety of thoughts, which by digestion it has made its own, it is wonderful how rapid by habit those combinations become which we generally attribute to genius only. Then again, as Carlyle says of Mirabeau, who was charged with using other men's materials "to make other men's thoughts really your own, and not simply reproduce them, is an evidence of genius. Why did they not make as much use of the raw material of their own thoughts as he did?"

## LI.

I will quote a passage which has struck me :

"The true art of moral culture is to balance extravagant tendencies by quickening those which are languid. Growth is a safer means of producing harmony in character than repression." How often have I felt and said this! You can not descend to the regions of the lower nature, and wrestle with success there. You must go above and fight them, as Perseus fought the dragon that would have destroyed Andromeda, on wings in the air. The lower is subdued, not by repression, but by making it simply an instrument of the higher. No fasting, for instance, will make the soul pure, but a noble attachment will keep all baser feelings in check and enoble them. By-the-by, that is a better remedy than Cato's; that was the very essence of St. Paul's system; that was the Gospel according to him. Not repression, coercion, law—that only produces dreadful conflict. "Ye can not do the things ye would." "Walk in the spirit"—the higher life of loftier motives—"and then ye will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh;" and that is true particularly as well as generally. No court-martial or provost-marshal's cord would stop thieving in a regiment, or make a coward brave, but an *esprit de corps* and honor have done it again and again.

I am quite sure that is the real answer to Tractarianism and Sabbatarianism. Those systems, "as systems," will not produce animals as noble even as the dog is, though I admit there are some of the noblest of the species hampered by them, and also that some who never can be made noble require to be kept by them from doing harm.

I sometimes believe that the expression of communion is much more rich and varied where the presence is only that of mind, than when friends are together, and hour after hour passes, each taking for granted that all which he desires to say is understood. The presence which is bodily soothes and contents, but perhaps for that very reason checks the utterance of thought and feeling, which only becomes articulate from a sense of want. Is not



that the history of the origin of speech itself? Is it not want which brings out the child's first tones, and elaborates language as the requirements of men, by civilization, become more multiplied and complex? And if we had perfect fullness of all things, the entire beatitude of being without a want, possessing all blessedness within, should we not lapse into the eternal silence of God himself?

All the utterances of man—his music, and his poetry, the heir-loom which the gifted have bequeathed to their species—are but the results of a want, of a loneliness which coarser and blunter spirits had been fortunate, or unfortunate, enough not to feel, and which compelled *them* to articulate expressions, like the thirsting baby, in moans, or cries of happiness, as the case might be.

## LII.

November 10.

I quite agree with what you say about sympathy produced by fault, but I think you will not find my view inconsistent. I only say that mercy which is shown by us sinners to sinners is either deficient or extravagant. Fair, generous, firm mercy is only shown by One who has been tempted and not erred. I gave three examples—Paul the apostle and David, of severity; the former having not been tempted, and the latter having fallen — one of weak leniency, Saul the king, who sympathized too much with Agag.

Miss —— is a kind, true friend, but I do not quite accept what she says about V——'s life being too clumsy and real. No; remember, He had nowhere to lay his head; that was clumsy and real enough. Paul, whom I consider the sublimest of the human race, toiled at tent-making. Elizabeth Fry went into dirty dungeons, and in Ireland would have, with indomitable perseverance, done something in mud hovels. I only wish there were more real coarseness forced into V——'s life. The outward and visible do not always weigh down the inward, but often inward life wants more pressure on it from without to make it salient. The noble frigate looks heavy enough in calm, but springs to the gale, like a sea-bird, gracefully. Rely upon it, the real poetry of life is found where He found it—in multiplying loaves and fishes, in descending to things so mean as wine required for a feast, in collecting a few rude, simple people round Him, in working the earlier part of His existence humbly at the carpenter's trade, in a very homely existence, and V—— ought not to talk of submission, or of a nunnery. Did you ever read Blanco White's description of a nun's life and mind—its stagnation, its anile childishness, its over-conscious purity, which is really impurity; its miserable, crushed natural tendencies, and the dreadful revenge nature takes in asserting her rights? Trust me, she who would be wiser than her Maker is only seeming wise. She who nourishes one part of her being by the extinction of another is but a stunted monstrosity after all. Let V—— be sure that God has given a woman no nobler destiny than that of an abundant home, not the less noble for its trials. Her tone is not a worthy one; it is effeminate, not *feminine*.

I wish to speak firmly. V—— would despise me if I did not. He was not a true friend, but a sentimentalist for the moment, who was for taking all the coarseness and *terre-à-terre* life out of the way, that his Divine Friend might lead a languid, poetical life of comfort. I would not be a Satan to her. No. Is a *terre-à-terre* life after all as sharp as the cross? Are howling winds and cold rooms as unpoetical as Pilate's judgment-hall and the rude mock of the ruffian soldiery?

In speaking of "Knox's Rambles," and the effects of association with men in sharpening the intellect, you remark that this seems inconsistent with the fact that great spirits have been nursed in solitude. Yes, but not the ploughman's solitude. Moses was forty years in Midian, but he had the education

of Egypt before, and habits of thought and observation began, as shown in his spirit of inquiry, with regard to the burning forest. Usually, I suppose, the spark has been struck by some superior mind, either in conversation or through reading. Ferguson was, perhaps, an exception. Then, again, stirring times set such master-minds to work even in this solitude, as in Cromwell's case. I remember, too, a line of Goethe's, in which he says :

Talent forms itself in solitude,  
Character in the storms of life.

But I believe both your positions are true. The soul collects its mightiest forces by being thrown in upon itself, and coerced solitude often matures the mental and moral character marvellously, as in Luther's confinement in the Wartburg. Or, to take a loftier example, Paul during his three years in Arabia; or, grander still, His solitude in the desert: the Baptist's too. But, on the other hand, solitude unbroken, from earliest infancy, or with nothing to sharpen the mind, either by collision with other minds, or the expectation of some new sphere of action shortly, would, I suppose, rust the mental energies. Still there is the spirit to be disciplined, humbled, and strengthened, and it may gain in proportion as the mind is losing its sharpening education.

I have just read Keble's hymn for the twenty-third Sunday after Trinity. The last stanza but one is truly consolatory; and those lines about the dead leaves represent a feeling which is irresistible in autumn. I recollect how sometimes the heaps of soft leaves, the fluttering of the falling ones through the air, have brought almost a pang to my heart. Do you know sometimes they have made me think of my mother's gray hairs, with melancholy reminiscences of what she was. The un murmuring way in which the vegetable creation resign their lives is very striking, as a thought in connection with the great law of being; for by the sacrifice of life, voluntary or involuntary, and by that alone, can other and higher life exist. The mineral soil gives its force to the grass, and the grass its life to the cattle, and they sacrifice theirs for man; all that is involuntary, and of course there is in it nothing great or good. But voluntary acquiescence in and working with that manifested law or will of God is the very essence of human goodness. Is it not another name for Love?

### LIII.

The difference between Moses and Anaxagoras, the Epistles and the "Excursion," I believe is in degree. The Light or the Word which dwells in all men, dwells in loftier degree in some than in others, and also is of a nobler kind of inspiration. Bezaleel and Aholiab—artificers—were men inspired, we are told. Why they more than other seers of the Beautiful? But who would compare their enlightenment with that which ennobles the life instead of purifying the taste? And, again, who would compare a philosopher, physical or metaphysical, revealing in the one case the laws of matter, and in the other the laws of mind, with the revealer of spiritual truth? Is the *dictum* of Anaxagoras, that all our sense of knowledge is delusive, to be compared with that which Moses reveals—Jehovah is one Lord and Holy? The "Excursion" reveals some beautiful truths of our moral being, but by how much our spiritual life is higher than our sensitive and moral, so much are the Epistles above the "Excursion"—higher in kind and higher also in degree of inspiration, for the Apostles claim, in matters spiritual, unerring power of truth. Newton's revelation of the order of the heavens, grand as it was, is inferior to that which we technically call inspiration, by how much one single human soul transcends the whole material universe in value.

I think it comes to this: God is the Father of Lights, and—the King in his beauty, and—the Lord of Love. All our several degrees of knowledge

attained in these departments—are from Him. One department is higher than another; in each department, too, the degree of knowledge may vary from a glimmering glimpse to infallibility: so that all is properly inspiration, but immensely differing in value and in degree. If it be replied that this degrades inspiration by classing it with things so common, the answer is plain: a sponge and a man are both animals, but the degrees between them are almost incalculable.

I think this view of the matter is important, because in the other way some twenty or thirty men in the world's history have had a special communication, miraculous, and from God. In this all have it, and by devout and earnest cultivation of the mind and heart may have it increased illimitably. This is really practical.

## LIV.

My morning was broken up. I could not go out to Hurst until half an hour before two, just in time to see the children off by the train. There was then an hour and a half to wait for the next train. I sat down upon a bench, and read a small work of Ullmann's, a professor at Heidelberg. It was a wild day, with driving clouds, drizzling rain, and lurid gleams of sunshine at intervals; but warm. It was rather fine to see the black and lead-colored clouds drifting over the steep sides of the Downs, sometimes so dark and solemn in their march that I felt a kind of awe creeping over me. I am very fond of a *driving* sky, when it is not monotonous, and when the altitudes of the clouds vary a good deal—some sweeping quite low and only just topping the hills, others sailing more slowly far above, and with tracts of clouds between these. The variety of color, the great diversity of speed, give a great charm to such an aerial effect: it impresses you more with the idea of supernatural *life* than when a surface of cloud is drawn at one uniform speed across the sky. Coming home, the heavens cleared brightly towards the setting sun, while all the rest was denser and more leaden by the contrast. Orange flakes and lines were shot across a clear sea-green sky, passing into blue, but made green where the yellow mingled with the blue, without any red to keep the two from blending. But it was the wildness of the whole, and the recklessness with which the whole air seemed animated, that gave the day its peculiar character, and power of exciting interest. I sat and read, and watched effect after effect, until the air and I seemed friends.

The miserable Mannings were executed this morning; they have been hawking the account of their last hours about Brighton, but I have not yet seen it. There is something disgusting in the thought of a large class of human beings getting their livelihood out of a death so horrible.

I have not maturely considered capital punishment. The questions are, Does it deter from crime by example? Does it give a deeper dye to sin in public estimation? or does it harden by the spectacle, and enlist public sympathy on the side of the criminal, instead of on the side of the law? Or rather, there is a previous question to be settled: is the object of punishment threefold only—to serve as an example to others, to ameliorate the offender, and in some cases to defend society by his entire removal? Or is there a fourth element, the expression of righteous vengeance? for I acknowledge I can not look upon vengeance as merely remedial. The sense of indignation which arises in the human bosom spontaneously against some crimes must, in a degree, be a reflection of that which resides in the mind of Deity. If so, there is in Him that which the Scripture calls wrath, and we are not entitled, I think, to assume that all penalty is intended to effect, or can effect, the reformation of the offender. Probably some penalties are final, expressing infinite justice, and then the higher award of human law must resemble that. It is the indignation of society or mankind purified of all personal

vindictiveness, expressed in a final punishment. For doubtless man—that is, society, as distinguished from individual man—speaks in a degree with the authority of God. “He hath committed all judgment unto him, because he is the son of Man.” All hangs on that. Is final penalty the dignified expression of *vengeance*, putting aside the question of remedy or of social safety, and does not the element of vengeance enter into all punishment? If not, why does the feeling exist, not as a sinful, but as an essential part of human nature: in *His* words, too, and acts?

I do not know any other ground on which I could defend capital punishment, for the Scriptural authority, “whoso sheddeth man’s blood,” etc., is quite inconclusive, being a Jewish rule, and it would be hard to show that it belongs to the race as well as to the nation. Nor do I think there is much weight in the horror which the idea excites of “hurrying the sinner before his Judge,” and taking from him what you can not restore. Perhaps there is something mawkish in this. The law of society may be just as truly the voice of God, declaring the termination of the criminal’s existence, as a fever, or an earthquake, or, as a better parallel, his own suicide would be; and if so, I would no more shrink from pronouncing sentence than I would from defending my own life by the destruction of another’s.

On the other hand, the great difficulty is, that a murder committed suddenly, with half an hour’s preparation, must be visited with the same penalty as a crime such as that of Rush or the Mannings.

And again, if the feeling of society be so strongly averse to shedding blood that, as now, there is a morbid interest for the criminal, and ladies sentimentalize, and send bouquets, and use compassionating opera-glasses, while philanthropists rouse public indignation against the law, then it is plain that, whether or not the public conscience has become diseased, it is better to award a milder punishment to criminals, and so continue the public indignation felt against them, than to make crime interesting, and its details the pungent element in such books as “Jack Sheppard.”

Whatever becomes of the abstract question of the rightfulness of capital punishment, I feel persuaded that society in England is fast approaching to a state in which it will be perilous to the morals of the community to retain the practice much longer. Symptoms of disgust and sympathy are beginning to be manifested so generally, that it is only in atrocious cases, where a feeling of revenge for a horrible cruelty satisfies itself with the criminal’s death, that deep murmurs of dissatisfaction can be suppressed.

Those are my crude thoughts on the subject.

You ask what is the meaning of Keble’s line—

Who for the spangles wears the funeral pall?\*

He has just said, that earth would not be worth having, if it were all, even though affection’s kiss brightens it often; and then compares those kisses to spangles on the pall. Who would be in a coffin for the pleasure of having a velvet pall with spangles over him? What matters it to the dead? It is not a very polite insinuation, however, to “dear affection.” He means, who would live this dead life for the sake of a few moments of affectionate happiness, or rather a good many, for he says “oft?” I reply, I would.

I agree with you about Shelley, as to his exquisite delicacy and his power of expressing the inexpressible. There certainly was no coarseness in his mind; still I do not know whether that very refinement be not sometimes more dangerous than what is coarse. So thought Shakspeare:

’Tis too much known, that with devotion’s visage  
And pious action we do sugar o’er  
The devil himself.

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\* Hymn, Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

I do not, however, really include Shelley in this, because false, miserably false, as his creed and system were, I do believe that a soul truly refined, pure, and filled with a large love, dwelt in him. There was, however, a fibre of madness in his composition. That "Sunset" is very beautiful; but those lines are morbid, and belong to the region of spectral phantasms, not real life, not the life of sunny humanity, peopled by

Creatures not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food.

The charnel-house, and the tombs with "dead selves," "vexed ghosts," and a kind of madness, are all very well for a being who is half insane, as Shelley certainly was; but positively I will not walk with any one in these tenebrous avenues of cypress and yew. I like sunny rooms, and sunny Truth. When I had more of spring and warmth I could afford to be prodigal of happiness; love the "darksome lawn brushed by the owl's wing;" and meditate for hours over decay. Now I want sunlight and sunshine. I desire to enter into those regions where cheerfulness, and truth, and health of mind and heart reside.

In the seventh verse of Keble, it ought to be "were," not "where."

LV.

November 16.

You ask if Christ's will was strong, simply because upheld by the Spirit without measure in Him? I should reply, because He was a perfect man. Perfect man is manhood with all its appetites, affections, moral sense, aspirations, intellect, in complete equilibrium. Fallen man is not a watch with something wrong added (sin), but merely a watch without the regulator; the main-spring runs the chain out too fast. He alone had a mind in entire harmony with God's. He alone could say, "I and my Father are one." "My father worketh hitherto, and I work." It was that entire harmony with the mind of God which made His will so strong. Self-will is weak sometimes, even in a Napoleon. The will that moves with God must be strong, and ever right. "My judgment is just." Why? "Because I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." \* \* \*

You ask me about sins of thought. I suppose some persons have sinned by the argument you mentioned, that having done as wrong as they could by an evil thought, there was no reason why they should debar themselves of the rest. But *if* this were an honest argument, it proceeded upon an entire misconception of the passages which would be alleged. The Saviour told men who were priding themselves upon being immaculate in act, that numbers of them would have done the sin if they had had an opportunity, or if they had dared. To have thought it and wished it, placed them on a level with those over whom they were triumphing. But it is one thing to say that a man who *would* do a crime if he could, having already done it in his heart, is just as guilty as if he had done it; and it is quite another thing to say that a person who has had an opportunity and checked himself—for instance, spared his enemy's life when he was on the point of taking it—is as bad as if he had done it. The difference is very plain: the one would if he could—the other could and would not. The great controversy between Him and Judaism was respecting the value of acts. They held that to have not been "extortioners, unjust," etc., entitled them to thank God they were not as other men were. He announced that the act received its quality from the spirit in which it was done. Feeling decided the question. Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts. Many a one who was priding himself there, was just as bad as if he had sinned. What thanks to the rich Pharisee that he had never been an extortioner like the needy publican? In kind they were guilty of the very sins which they condemned. "He that is without *that*

sin, let him first cast a stone." Is there not many a murderer who has never taken away life, but in his heart again and again killed with a deadly hatred? Now the test whether he is a murderer or not comes when his foe is in his power, when the danger of detection seems past, where there is nothing but his own will and conscience to guide his act. David had such a chance, and so had Saul. Neither slew the other, but Saul hurled his javelin with a right good will, and David at the very last moment spared Saul and Nabal. Which was the murderer? Which had really slain the other in his heart? And do you fancy David might just as well have taken those two men's lives, having resolved on it? Why, there is the parable of the son who said to his father, "I go not," and afterwards went. The resolve of disobedience was made. Do we fancy that it was not in any way reversed or cancelled by the change of purpose? The comment of Christ is that he (that son) did the will of his father. There is no passage in which it is said that the sin of thought is equal to the sin of act. It is simply said the sin of act may be done in thought, so far as thought goes. Whether it is equivalent to an act, I think entirely depends, as I said before, upon the question whether, opportunity and safety being given, it is carried into action. Where these are not actually given in this world, clearly only God knows whether it would have been carried into act. Of course I do not say that the sin of even resolve is trifling. I only say that there are many steps, and until the act of sin is done there will always remain one step more of turpitude: except in those cases to which He so often alludes, where nothing but circumstances, and not the heart, prevented the commission. But *that* would convict many a prude and many a sanctimonious thing who holds up his immaculate hands in pious astonishment at that which he would gladly do if he dared. Nay, I do believe that a secret leaning towards the sin, and a secret feeling of provocation and jealousy towards those who have enjoyed what *they* dare not, lies at the bottom of half the censorious zeal for morality which we hear. I am nearly sure it is so with women in their virulence against their own sex; they feel malice, because they envy them. There is a marvellous touch of inspiration in "Timon of Athens," I think—a cutting down into the marrow of truth which is perfectly startling in its knowledge of human nature. I fear I can scarcely venture to quote it. I remember that, even as a boy, it set me thinking.

Dr. Channing's life is full of interest, but of a calm, thoughtful kind. He had no adventures; nor were his inward struggles, as detailed, at least, very striking. He had taken immense pains with himself, but the nobler element of his nature was so strongly predominant, that his life was steady, continuous victory, unmarked by any of those partial victories of evil which give fearful interest to the lives of the greater part of those who have fought their way to uncommon excellence. The purest love for man, the most unconquerable trust in human nature, seem to have been the very basis of his being. He was a Unitarian, but that is a very wide term, including a vast variety of persons thinking very differently on essentials. I can only say that I should be very glad if half of those who recognize the hereditary claims of the Son of God to worship bowed down before his moral dignity with an adoration half as profound, or a love half as enthusiastic, as Dr. Channing's. I wish I, a Trinitarian, loved and adored Him, and the Divine goodness in Him, any thing near the way in which that Unitarian felt. A religious lady found the book on my table a few days ago, and was horror-struck. I told her that if she and I ever got to heaven, we should find Dr. Channing revolving round the central Light in an orbit immeasurably nearer than ours, almost invisible to us, and lost in a blaze of light; which she has, no doubt, duly reported to the Brighton inquisition for heretics. But, by-the-by, I began on that very day to write out the conversation. Here it is—all incomplete.

A lady called to-day, and when she came into the drawing-room she put her hand on "Channing's Memoirs." "I am sorry to see you read this book, Mr. Robertson." I replied, "Dr. Channing was one of the highest of his species. For a minister to refuse to read such a book would be miserable. I am not so sensitively afraid of error as that. I throw myself on the Father of Lights, read all, and trust that He will answer a desire for light. An immoral book I refuse to read, but a book containing merely false doctrine, or what is supposed to be false, I dare not refuse to read; or else I could not, with any consistency, ask a Roman Catholic to read my book of Protestant heresy." "But Dr. Channing could not be a good man, because he did not believe in Christ." "Pardon me, he did—he loved Christ. I wish I adored Him half as much as Dr. Channing did!" "But he denied that he adored Him." "I can not help that. If the lowliest reverence, and the most enthusiastic love, constitute adoration, Dr. Channing worshipped Christ. I care not what a man says. His homage was more adoring than that of nine out of ten who call Him God. Besides, do you remember the story of the two sons, one of whom said, 'I go, sir,' and went not; the other refused to go, and went? What care I, if Dr. Channing adores, *saying* that he does not adore?" She replied, "I believe he adored himself much more." I returned, "That some passages in his Diary expressed the deepest self-abasement." "Well, probably he had a high ideal; he was mortified at not attaining that before the world." "Do you recollect," I answered, "how the Pharisees get over a similar difficulty to yours? There was a holy man before them, and because they could not deny the beauty of his deeds, they found out that they were done from diabolical motives, for Beelzebub's cause. Take care; do you recollect what sin they committed by that, seeing good, and refusing to recognize it as good? It is a perilous thing to set out with the assumption that a doctrine is true, and that all who do not hold that doctrine are bad. Christ reverses that order of procedure. 'Believe me for the works' sake.' I would just as soon disbelieve in God as contemplate a character like Dr. Channing's, and hesitate to say whether that was a divine image or not; whether God had accepted him or not: whether those deeds and that life were the product of evil or the fruit of the heavenly Spirit."

## LVI.

November 18.

I am very unfit to write; much tired, dispirited, and lonely. Several reasons may have contributed to this. The day was dark with fog and gloom. I spoke very badly indeed, though fluently, and this has added a depressing sensation of impotency to sadness. I know that it is partly physical; that I am not myself, nor master of my fancies, and therefore I will not let my pen pour out feelings of which I might be ashamed, and which certainly I should disown to-morrow. I am persuaded there are few things morally so bad as excitement of the nerves in any way; nothing—to borrow a military word, and use it in a military sense—nothing *demoralizes* so much as excitement. It destroys the tone of the heart; leaves an exhaustion which craves stimulus, and utterly unfits for duty. High-wrought feeling must end in wickedness; a life of excitement is inseparable from a life of vice. The opera, the stage, the ball-room, French literature, and irregular life, what *must* they terminate in? And I should almost add, the pulpit, where the nervous system is more than ordinarily susceptible. I can only defend it on that which I believe to be the great law of our being, sacrifice—sacrifice for others. You can have little idea of the gloomy thoughts with which I have to struggle on many Sunday evenings.

It is Keble's beautiful hymn to-night, on the loneliness of the soul.\* I

\* Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

have read it, and tried to think of what ideas would be suggested in association with the separate verses. Is it quite true that no human eye could be permitted safely to read all, and scan the inmost workings of the heart? Would the recoil be in every case, as he images it, like a mother's arm from a serpent coiled round her loved infant? I suppose it is impossible to read with tenderness and mercy. Personal feelings come in; inability to take in all circumstances before and after: we judge severely that which is uncongenial with our tendencies; nay, even that also which is congenial; for I fancy we dislike our own feelings in another—they seem caricatures. And yet I do not quite agree. I think there are some minds and hearts which might be safely trusted to read all without losing their respect and affection for us. Doubtless these must be of the very highest order. I could only name one or two. I remember an anecdote of Thomas Scott having said to his curate, who was rather agitated on having to preach before him, "Well, sir, why should you be afraid before me, when you are not afraid before God?" But how very easy it was to answer! He had only to say, God is not jealous, nor envious, nor censorious; besides, God can make allowances. \* \* \*

I will do all I can to answer fully your deeply-important questions. I can answer them, for I had to find the answer for myself through much mental trial: whether it will satisfy you I do not know. But the irrationality of the popular Brahminical system shocked me, for it is Brahminical. I believe in the Atonement now, in a nobler sense than I did before, and also in His sufferings for the sins of men; but not chastisement, or hell, as they horribly call it—nor His Father's wrath.

First, respecting His "sympathy," which you seem to think represented as little in my sermon: and you speak of the trifling pain of fasting. Recollect, however, that the whole majesty of the temptation is destroyed if you understand it literally.

What was the temptation? To use Divine power to procure comfort; to choose abundance instead of stones; a life of ease instead of the hard rock on which the highest must repose ever in this world. How many houses would have been open to Him like that of Bethany, had He chosen! Instead of executing His mission, might He not have turned aside to live in abundance? You must remember His soul was preparing for its work; He was forecasting the trials of His life; His spirit was silently acquiescing in and recognizing His destiny, and, one by one, dismissing the alternatives which suggested themselves—a life of ease instead of hardness; rashness and distrustful impetuosity instead of the slow, patient toil of years, and after that of centuries; homage to the "splendid majesty of Wrong;" expediency, in some form or other; to make the kingdoms of the world His own, instead of uncompromising worship of the good—unless you keep all this in mind, of course it is ridiculous to talk of any thing very divine in fasting. I only gave fasting as a convenient illustration of the way in which there might be pain in subduing the affections and appetites, and yet no sin; how He might really suffer being tempted, with no tendencies to evil. But, of course, I recognized, and even expressly mentioned, the suffering of the tempted human soul as the far more important part of His trial. You say you can not look upon those trials and tests as any thing; but have you reflected that that temptation was but an image of temptations which in a thousand forms beset Him through life? Have you thought what it was for a real man to excogitate a course of action which was new in the world's history, and steadily keep to it in spite of treachery and desertion, the apparent worthlessness of human nature, the ripe rottenness at the core of the nation whose blessing he was bent on accomplishing? Have you reflected how He might have purchased life by silence and a very little prudent time-serving; what it is to be alone, misunderstood, and in dreadful sense of forsakenness at last to feel that all was failure; to



hope for human nature in its lowest degradation ; to believe that man is kindred with Deity, even in Jerusalem ; to see a spark in the worst outcast which might become a bright and blessed flame ; to despair of none ; to hope for human nature even with His last breath on the cross, and with laughter of His devil-like foes rising to his dying ear ?

Is there no sympathy here ? Are those light tests ? Think you He can not sympathize with our worst sorrows, who shielded from scorn the broken-hearted who could only smite upon his breast ; who stood like a God between their victim and the hell-hounds who were baying for their prey, till they cowered at His feet and slunk away ; who could forgive a coward, and select the alien and heretic as a type of the neighbor who is to be loved ; who was peculiarly sensitive to the charm of woman's society and its soothing gentleness ; who wept for temporary grief ; who was considerate for the tired disciples and the hungry multitude ; whose chosen home was the house of the publican and sinner ; who bore contempt with majestic dignity—is that a trifle ?—who felt keenly, as His own touching words witness, the pain of homelessness ? Oh, can you say that He could not enter into our worst sorrows, or that His trials were in “show !” Comprehend that heart, containing all that was manliest and all that was most womanly. Think what you will, but do not mistake Him, or else you will lose the one great certainty to which, in the midst of the darkest doubt, I never ceased to cling—the entire symmetry and loveliness, and the unequalled nobleness of the humanity of the Son of Man. Ask me any questions you will on this, for if there have been a subject I have pondered over and believed in, it is the mind and heart of Jesus. Do not go to that absurd nonsense of mysterious suffering that can not be comprehended—something neither of earth nor heaven, neither the affection of the man nor the God—a mystery, and so forth, of which the Bible says nothing. Mysterious enough they were, as the sufferings of the deepest hearts ever must be, but mysterious only in this sense. Alas ! they are intelligible enough to any one who has ever conceived sublime mission with a warm heart, and felt courage and tenderness fail in the idea of executing it ; intelligible enough for any one who knows what it is to be wrung to the heart by the sorrows and faults of others. All that is unintelligible is the *degree* of agony. To understand that, we must first be like Him—as noble, and as loving, and as spotless.

As to the sacrifice—penalty and its atonement for sin—I will try to take it for my next Sunday subject.

#### LVII.

Mr. Crabb Robinson has lent me a “Life of Swedenborg,” which seems to have impressed him greatly. I have been running it over while at dinner, but can make out nothing, except that Swedenborg was a man of great genius, under hallucinations of the intellect. He was very abstemious, singularly pure in life in every way ; his chief beverage was coffee made very sweet, without milk ; he abstained during his latter years from animal food, and passed whole nights without sleep. He held a perpetual communion with departed spirits, but I observe they were all those whose lives had impressed his imagination, and, if not men of genius, seem to have been generally kings, dukes, princesses, and persons of such earthly greatness. In some of the quotations there are evidently flashes of very intuitive genius, poured on or into scriptural passages. The intuitions are true, but they have as little to do with the passages as they have with the Koran ; and had he been a Mohammedan, he might have spiritualized the Koran in the same way. His biographer, who is not an admirer, but a blind idolater of him, takes them, of course, as authentic expositions. Perceiving that in themselves they are marvellously true, he takes for granted that they are the very truths present-

ed and intended by those texts. One grand truth he seems to have grasped—the fact of Divine Humanity as the only possible object of man's worship. He has besides identified Jesus Christ with this object. I have long felt the truth of the former of these positions, and I am more and more satisfied of the truth of the latter. Only a human God, and none other, must be adored by man. The important thing in the worship is, that it be a Divine, and not a sensual or even a rational humanity. I extract a passage, which also agrees with my creed, though I do not know that I ever borrowed mine except from my own reflection.

“Sex is a permanent fact in human nature. Men are men, and women women, in the highest heaven as here on earth. The difference of sexes is therefore brighter and more exquisite in proportion as the person is high and the sphere is pure. The distinction not only reaches to the individual, but it is atomically minute besides. Every thought, affection, and sense of a male is male; and of a female, feminine. The smallest drop of intellect or will is inconvertible between the sexes. If man's, it can never become woman's, and *vice versâ*. The sexual distinction is founded upon two radical attributes of God—his divine love and his divine wisdom, whereof the former is feminine and the latter masculine. The union of these in Him is the divine marriage, and the creation proceeds distinctly from them, and images or aspires to a marriage in every part. Therefore, there are marriages in heaven, and heaven itself is a marriage.”

He then oddly reconciles this with the text, “In heaven they neither marry,” etc.

Then there are the most extraordinary accounts of expiration and inspiration of the breath; the latter connecting the thoughts with the earthy; the former, or the retention of the breath, which is the same thing, connecting with the spiritual world. Swedenborg declares that he lived for hours without inspiring, and a host of odd stories about divers, Indian yogies, people in a trance, and the whole phenomena of hybernation, are alleged in corroboration, but I shall not take up your time with those.

Mr. C—R—drank tea with me last night. He was full of anecdote, and more than I ever saw him anxious for religious information. Last Sunday's sermon seems to have struck him, and appeared very original. In a discussion in some party, where I was the subject of malevolent remark, accusations of heterodoxy, etc., he said, “the only thing I can say is, that I never heard him without having some stumbling-block removed; and doctrines that appeared to me absurd in the orthodox system shown to be in harmony with eternal reason and truth.” He told me a curious story in illustration of the way in which skepticism follows upon superstition. When a boy, he obtained permission to witness the celebration of the Communion from the gallery of the Dissenting chapel in which his parents worshipped. The bread had been cut into squares, and then piled up again in its own natural form of a loaf. When he saw this fall in pieces regularly diced, at a single touch of the venerable old minister's hand, he trembled, and thought a miracle had been performed; but when he expressed his wonder to another boy, and was told the secret, instantly his feeling was that a trick of deception had been played. Accordingly, at supper, he cut up his own roll, and said to his father, “Now, see me do the Sacrament as well as Mr. —;” the roll tumbled into square fragments amid peals of laughter; upon which he was punished, instead of having it quietly explained to him that no deception had been intended; but who does not see that that apparent irreverence was real reverence for truth, and that Luther exposing Tetzels indulgences was not more really doing a religious act than the child who was pouring light upon what he believed to be a sham? They laid the first seeds of skepticism in a young heart, by demanding irrational and blind instead of rational reverence for mysteries.

LVIII.

As I walked home in my dragoon cloak, I thought that I ought to be at this moment lying in it at rest at Moodkee, where the Third fought so gallantly, and where spots of brighter green than usual are the only record to mark where the flesh of heroes is melting into its kindred dust again; but in this, as in all other things, a man must reap as he has sown. I believe the spirit of exceeding self-devotion, as a mere romantic instinct, is but folly. Your reward is the satisfaction of finding that you have lost all and gained nothing as well as done nothing. Your thanks are reproach and blame, and you begin to find, when it is too late, that wisdom and prudence alone can redeem even self-sacrifice from the worthless class of mere blind instincts. One man's instinct is to save his life, another's to lose it; one's to get rid of self, another's to pamper it; one's to give away, another's to save up. These are only instincts in themselves neither good nor evil, except as guided by thought, and, by being an instrument of *that*, ennobled. \* \* \*

I agree with and admire all you say about capital punishment. I doubt its efficacy much. I am not quite sure that the sole, or even chief end of punishment is the reformation of the offender. I think a great deal of *law*. Law rules Deity; and its awful majesty is above individual happiness. That is what Kant calls "the categorical imperative," that is a sense of duty which commands categorically or absolutely—not saying "it is better," but "thou shalt." Why? Because "thou shalt," that is all. It is not best to do right—thou must do right; and the conscience that feels that, and in that way, is the nearest to divine humanity. Not that law was made, like the Sabbath, for man; but man was made for it. He is beneath it, a grain of dust before it: it moves on, and if he will not move before it, it crushes him; that is all, and that is punishment. I fancy that grand notion of law is what we have lost, what we require to get, before we are in a position to discuss the question of punishment at all, or to understand what it is. Your criticism on my expression—"vengeance," is just; but what I meant was a truth, though I expressed it badly: I have tried to restate it in what I have now said of law.

To-day I read Keble.\* It is singularly beautiful to-day. Do you observe the parallel which pervades it? The rainbow in the morning spoken of in stanza two, and that of the evening in stanza six, are taken as the types of life. The proverb is:

A rainbow in the morning is the shepherd's warning,  
But a rainbow at night is the shepherd's delight.

The reason of this is, that a rainbow in the morning, being always opposite the sun, must be in the west: the rain is falling there therefore, and that is the rainy quarter; at night it must be raining in the east, from which quarter not much rain is to be expected.

I fancy Keble's observation is quite correct in reference to character. The kindling eye, etc., betray the child of impulse and vivid emotion, which are so frequently found disconnected from principle, and most truly, I think, he describes such a man's life, "dawnings gay, bright noons of sun and shower."

I think the pastor was quite right to sigh over such a child. Philip Van Artevelde has the same idea:

—her dawn  
Was bright with sunbeams, whence is drawn  
A sure prognostic that the day  
Will not unclouded pass away.

Bright sunrise—sunset dark, mixed with clouds, sorrow, and uncertainty.

\* Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

The other character is the safest, the surest, and, in the end, the most blessed—when the calm, steady, humble inquiring heart feels the beam of everlasting Truth and mild Love burst upon it in the serenity of life's evening, the rainbow of hope throwing its tinted arch over the feebleness of declining years. There is in this a good deal of true insight into character and destiny. And yet, looking over the children of a family, how nine parents out of ten would reverse that prophecy, and anticipate success and happiness from the radiant one, suffering the other to fall unnoticed into the background. I believe that life always falsifies *this* estimate. The rainbow child is soon quenched in tears and darkness. The great men in nearly all departments of existence have been the dunces of the nursery and the school-room. "The first shall be last, and the last first." How the deeper inspiration reverses the prophecy of semblances! How precious in the sight of God those qualities are which we think of almost meanly—plodding habits, meekness of heart, sense of dependence; and how almost of the nature of curses what we call "gifts" are—beauty, brilliancy, sensitiveness, feeling; things, by-the-way, which are almost always connected with selfishness in some way or another, and therefore sown with the seeds of misery and failure. Quite right, Keble; teach us realities, and not semblances—to see things as God sees them, and in the spirit of true poetry, prophetic of results. That is a very graceful little poem, and deeply true.

## LIX.

My Advent lectures commence next week. I begin to briefly reply to your letter.

Robespierre's theory of the abolition of the punishment of death taken in connection with his subsequent atrocities never startle me. He never could have understood Portia's refusal to put even Shylock to death illegally. The eternal sanctions of Law were unintelligible to him. The transgression of Law was a trifle in comparison with human life, and, as you might have expected, human life was a trifle in comparison with a theory of his own. I should always anticipate that the rigorous expounder of law would be the one to be able to say most exquisitely in practice, "The quality of mercy is not strained." Did that rigor and mercy in Portia's character ever strike you as a union no less beautiful than true? And I should expect that a sentimental tenderness for life which is blind to the majesty of law, would be exactly the temperament that could be cruel when, not law, but itself, was interfered with. It spares to gratify its own feelings: it will not shrink from saying 200,000 aristocrats must die if its feeling demands the sacrifice. A severe view of Right, even if somewhat too severe, would have saved Robespierre from that. Of course, I do not mean that the objection to sanguinary punishment is necessarily sentimental, nor that it betrays obtuseness to the perception of the Absolute Imperative within the conscience. I only mean that very often it is so, and that tenderness to evil may be expected to precede a violent outburst of evil. As I said lately—"tempted, yet without sin," *therefore* we go boldly to find mercy. The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. For all this, however, Robespierre's view may have been right, though wrong in him; a little more sense of law and of wrong might have made him a defender of capital punishment. Perhaps a great deal more might have brought him in a vast circle back to the same point of mercy again. Extremes meet; and I think Lamartine's statement a powerful one: "Le moyen le plus efficace de déshonorer le meurtrier est d'en montrer par la loi une sainte horreur."

The administration of the communion to the murderer has always appeared to me, in every sense, a ghastly mockery. A minister of the gospel of forgiveness goes to the criminal with a message that, at least, appears singularly

inconsistent. The chaplain, in Mrs. Manning's case, I think, outraged all decency; nor do I see how, in any case, it is justifiable when the man, up to the very last fortnight, by pleading "not guilty," has remained impenitent. Better leave the whole in uncertainty for the next world; but the practice, I fancy, retains a lingering trace of the magical views of the sacrament. All this, however, is a digression, for I was alluding to the apparent inconsistency of putting a man to death after bringing to him words of mercy. Queen Elizabeth's "God may have mercy on you, I never can," and then a last deadly shake. Would it not have been almost superhuman to forgive, when a woman found that by diabolical malice she had been induced to irrecoverably slay the man who loved her to the last. Only fancy the rush of such an agony! "It can not be undone, and there lies the fiend who did it." I fear I could scarcely have said, "God may forgive you." It is in the demand for such superhuman efforts as these that Christianity appears sublime. Looking into my own heart, I think I could forgive the deadliest wrong done to myself. I do not think I could forgive one who had diabolically done a wrong to one I loved, or willfully made me commit a wrong towards that one which was irreparable. As usual, I ask how would He have felt? the latter case was impossible to Him; as to the former, I only know that His language towards those who crushed the weak, and in cold blood slew the innocent, was not mild. THEY "*knew* what they did." Did the last prayer include them? Whether the last confession of the dying countess might have touched pity, I do not know; but one could have hardly helped feeling, it is too late, this death-bed remorse.

"Le mystère de l'existence, c'est le rapport de nos erreurs avec nos peines."

Do you not understand that? It is the kind of connection which is the mystery. Crime is less severely treated than error. A weakness of the heart produces more misery, more both to self and others, and is more severely chastised than a deliberate wickedness. It has often made me ponder. Look at weak Eli, only a little too indulgent. The result—a country's dishonor and defeat, two profligates, a death-bed of a widow and mother on which despair sits, and the death of a wretched old man, for whom it would have been a mercy if his neck had been broken before his heart. Then, again, Pilate, only irresolution—the result, the ruin of the Holiest. My only solution of the mystery is this. The hardening effects of sin, which save from pain, are worse judgments than the sharpest suffering. Anguish is, I am more and more sure, corrective; hardness has in it no hope. Which would you choose if you were compelled to make a choice?—the torture of a dividing limb granulating again, and by the very torture giving indications of life, or the painlessness of mortification? the worse throb from the surgeon's knife, or ossification of the heart? In the spiritual world, the pangs of the most exquisite sensitiveness cut to the quick by the sense of fault and aching almost hopelessly, but leaving conscience still alive, and aspiration still uncrushed, or the death of every remnant of what is good, the ossification of the soul, the painless extinction of the moral being, its very self? This is my reply to myself. The whole mystery of pain has been unravelling itself to my heart gradually, and now that I have got a clue, the worse than Cretan labyrinth turns out to be harmonious and beautiful arrangement, so that the paths which are still unexplored I can now believe a part of the same plan. Pain has long ceased to be an unintelligible mystery to me. Agony and anguish—oh, in these, far more than in sunshine, I can read a meaning and believe in infinite love! Goodness is better than happiness; and if pain be the minister of goodness, I can see that it is a proof of love to debar happiness; nor am I moved from this conviction by exceptional cases, by perceiving that sometimes the result seems opposite, or by seeing that, as in the

brute creation, it falls in apparent wantonness, without any result beyond suffering. I am so certain that all is right, that nothing of this kind, mental or physical, disturbs me. I know that the heart, like the wound, must bleed till the wound has cleansed itself by its own blood. Then, and not till then, the blood will dry. The questions of the final removal of moral evil and its apparent inevitable necessity beyond even infinite power to remove, is a far heavier weight and darker shadow on my heart, but I have an answer to that too.

You say you do not think it was so difficult for our Lord, if he knew it was only to last three years. First of all, time is not measured by years; the intense heart throws centuries into an hour. Succession of thoughts, instead of dull repetition of a monotone, might make three years of incalculable length. Then, besides, remember it is a Man, out of the resources of His human mind, pondering over, recognizing, and resolving on a plan alone, which was new in the world's history, an untried battle with the worldly principle in its manifold manifestations. Only three years! Yes! but try to resolve on a plan—there are ten thousand possible to you—a plan for the country's good, which will involve, I do not say death, but great hardships in the teeth of all the conventions of society, and with the probability of having it said by your own relations, as it was said of Him, "He is beside himself." Keep to it unflinchingly, until you can say in the very hour of failure, triumphantly, "It is finished!" Only try that in a small way, and then say, three years are nothing—no, nothing when they are done, for the years go fast; but recollect the minutes move slow.

*Apropos* of the measurement of time, I remember two pretty lines of Moultrie:

I have a son, a third sweet son; his age I can not tell,  
For they reckon not by years or months where he is gone to dwell.

#### LX.

Much of the beauty that is laid to Shakspeare's charge is too far-fetched to have been intended by him. Mrs. Jameson errs in this respect, and so do the Germans. In an article in "Blackwood," years ago, replete with humor, I recollect these words, "And she," as the poet pathetically expresses it, "did so." Such critics do with Shakspeare just as Swedenborg with the Bible—inform it with themselves and their own sentiments and philosophy, or, as the wolf did with Baron Munchausen's horse, began at his tail and ate into him until the baron drove the wolf home, harnessed in the skin of the horse. Certainly Shakspeare was a "million-minded man," if he was conscious of the innumerable philosophies and psychological truths which his million critics have found in every trifling word and sentence. I am heretic enough to think that Shakspeare was mind and dust, and that he can be very low and gross. Horace ventured to opine that now and then Homer nodded a little; he said it in a very gentlemanly way—for the friend of Mæcenas was a perfect gentleman—but I have no doubt he was reckoned a heretic for saying it. What I admire in Shakspeare, however, is that his loves are all human—no earthliness hiding itself from itself in sentimental transcendentalism—no loves of the angels, which are the least angelic things, I believe, that float in the clouds, though they do look down upon mortal feelings with contempt, just as the dark volumes of smoke which issue from the long chimney of a manufactory might brood very sublimely over the town which they blacken, and fancy themselves far more ethereal than those vapors which steam up from the earth by day and night. Yet these are pure water, and those are destined to condense in black soot. So are the transcendentalisms of affection. Shakspeare is healthy, true to Humanity in this; and for that reason I pardon him even his earthly coarseness. You always know that you are on

an earth which has to be refined, instead of floating in the empyrean with wings of wax. Therein he is immeasurably greater than Shelley. Shelleyism is very sublime, sublimer a good deal than God, for God's world is all wrong, and Shelley is all right—much purer than Christ, for Shelley can criticise Christ's heart and life—nevertheless, Shelleyism is only atmospheric profligacy, to coin a Montgomeryism. I believe this to be one of Shakespeare's most wondrous qualities—the humanity of his nature and heart. There is a spirit of sunny endeavor about him, and an acquiescence in things as they are—not incompatible with a cheerful resolve to make them better, which I trust will be good for your mind. Mine wants it much. I speak bitterly of transcendentalism, for it is the rock on which I split; and I do not believe either in its usefulness or its heavenliness.

For man is not as God,  
But then most Godlike, being most a man.

A sunny, cheerful view of life—resting on truth and fact, coexisting with practical aspiration ever to make things, men, and self, better than they are—that, I believe, is the true healthful poetry of existence. All other poetry of feeling, however delicate and beautiful, is only sickly; the mawkish feeling, which sees more beauty in unnatural Consumption than in the ruddy glow of exercise.

## LXI.

I have got Schlegel, and mean to master all that he has said of Shakespeare. Spare moments of time I occupy in studying "Romeo and Juliet." Certainly it is the most exquisite embodiment of the master-feeling that was ever made. I shall have much to say about it soon. But one thing strikes me in a view of the whole—how very masterly the representation is of the unrelenting way in which consequences follow acts in this world. A clandestine marriage and a revengeful duel—the results are a double death. And that is not all. Circumstances mingle with all human acts; they are partly, as it would seem, necessitated, or, at least, excused by peculiarity of position. There is no act which has not its excuse and its apparent inevitableness. Ordinary writers tag a moral to their tale; as Miss Edgeworth does—which peeps out in every page: "If he had acted so, then," etc., but the moral of life is not forced upon you in this way; it is complicated, perplexing, and requires study to find out. Nay, you may find fifty morals instead of the moral of life's tragedy; and in this way Shakespeare paints. Partly circumstance, partly fault, partly what in itself is beautiful, lead to the catastrophe. Not one simple cause, but many causes intertwined, made up the shot web of his tragedy, as of life. And yet as unrelentingly as in life, the sorrow comes to blight it all. Situated as they were, a Montague and a Capulet, could they be severely blamed for marrying? Situated as Romeo was, his friend killed for him, could he refuse Tybalt's challenge? And yet these double errors, the results themselves of the faults of others, not wholly blameless, yet not unmingledly culpable, slowly and surely bring on the end.

There are three great principles in life which weave its *warp* and *woof*, apparently incompatible with each other, yet they harmonize, and, in their blending, create this strange life of ours. The first is, our fate is in our own hands, and our blessedness and misery is the exact result of our own acts. The second is, "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we will." The third is, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;" but time and chance happen (eth) to them all. Accident, human will, the shaping will of Deity: these things make up life. Or rather, perhaps, we see a threefold causality from some defect in our spiritual eyesight. Could we see as He sees, all would be referable to one principle

which would contain them all; as the simple, single law of gravitation embraces the complex phenomena of the universe; and as, on the other hand, by pressing the eyeballs so as to destroy their united impression, you may see all things double. Shakspeare paints man instead of writing moral tales. Of course, there is a moral in what he writes, as there must be in all that is true; but it is absurd to ask what was the lesson he meant to inculcate. He meant none, I fancy. He merely meant to say, "*There, there are men and women. Under such circumstances, such beings would act so, and such would be the consequences.*" How much more instructive than history, which is merely, except in mere annals, events grouped in the connection in which the historian sees them, not in which they occurred, unless he be a man as gifted as Shakspeare. Hence history is merely, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, Mr. Hume's or Mr. Gibbon's theory substantiated by a dry romance, until Mr. Somebody Else comes and writes the romance in his way, the facts being pliable, and equally available for both. Accordingly, Mitford's "*History of Greece*" is aristocratical principles demonstrated from Grecian history, and Connop Thirlwall's is democratical principles proved from the same facts, and Alison's *History* "is Mr. Wordy's account of the French Revolution in twenty volumes, written to show that Providence was always on the side of the Tories," as Coningsby's friend assured him. I do believe there was great wisdom in Marlborough's saying, that the only English history he knew, or that was worth knowing, was that written by Shakspeare, for Shakspeare does not give facts as they occurred—no, but he gives ideal facts, since the facts can not be got at.

You like to hear of my work and its success. Dr. King was expressing surprise at the thoughtfulness and freshness of last Sunday's sermon, which you have seen, and telling me of the slow and silent results of my teaching in revolutionizing long habits of thought, life, etc. I remarked, that what surprised me most was, that I had been left so long unmolested, in spite of great grumbling, dissatisfaction, and almost personal hatred. He said, "I can tell you the reason. You preach positively instead of negatively; you state truths which they can not deny; they can only talk of tendencies, consequences, etc.; they can only say it is dangerous, they dare not say it is false; if you were once to preach defensively or controversially, it would be all over with you, and it would do your heart and mind harm besides; but every one sees that you have a message and a truth to establish; you set up your truth, and they are dismayed to find, if *that* be true, their view is knocked down, but you did not knock it down." These were not his words, but the substance of what he said, and I think, on the whole, that it is not untrue. He told me that more than one clergyman had said to him, "I think exactly what Mr. R— said, but I should not dare to say it publicly." A Scotch gentleman remarked to another person, "Why, Irving was turned out of the Church of Scotland for saying one-tenth part of what Mr. R— said on Sunday of the human nature of Christ. What a happy thing it is that the Church of England is too divided to unite in exterminating him."\* Meanwhile I go on, resolving to be at least true. I feel no certain tenure of any thing or any one. I am prepared, at a moment's notice, to find the whole break up with a crash, as fine summer weather ends in a storm, the forces for which had been slowly collecting in the sunshine for weeks—nay, were the sunshine itself. I think I partly know what He felt in knowing that the crowds He addressed contained the Pharisees lying in wait, and yet went on. This is my feeling. I command crowds—I have not hearts.

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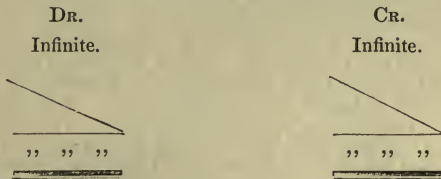
\* The Scotch gentleman made a mistake. Mr. Robertson's view of the human nature of Christ differs essentially from the view of Irving.



LXII.

MY DEAR —,—My prediction was right; yesterday morning rose with all the frost gone, and to-day it is raining fast, and the sky is dense with clouds.

I have been writing lately on the subject of Keble's lines.\* I have little doubt that the Church of Rome has paid far more attention than we have to that which forms the subject of this hymn—the treatment of penitence. She has more power to soothe, because she dwells chiefly on that which is the most glorious element in the nature of God—Love. Whereas Protestantism fixes attention more on that which is the strongest principle in the bosom of man—Faith. Accordingly, the Church of Rome treats the penitent by moving representations which touch the heart. Protestantism would do so by an appeal to the intellect, assuring you that if you will only believe, the whole pain has been suffered for you. When you state your misgivings, on perceiving that many of the penal consequences of faults follow transgression, in spite of faith, the reply is—“Yes, in this world; but in the next all the consequences are remitted.” Now this appeal to the intellect leaves the intellect to its own surmises. Why remitted *there* if not *here*? on what principle, and how proved? If no faith will save a drunken man from *delirium tremens*, where is the proof that it will shield him from other consequences hereafter? You are then referred to the Atonement, and informed in evangelical metaphysics that infinite sin demanded an infinite sacrifice; that the infinite sacrifice having been paid, it will be unjust to punish you again. Once more the intellect replies—“But I *am* punished; and if eternal punishment would be unjust, temporal punishment is also; the whole penalty is not paid, and, in spite of all my admiration of the clever scheme, the heart will have its dire misgivings.” It appears to me that Protestantism throws upon the intellect the work of healing which can only be performed by the heart. It comes with its parchment “signed, sealed, and delivered,” making over heaven to you by a legal bond, gives its receipt in full, makes a debtor and creditor account, clears up the whole by a most business-like arrangement:



And when this Shylock-like affair with the scales and weights is concluded, it bids you be sure that the most rigorous justice and savage cruelty can want no more. Whereupon selfishness shrewdly casts up the account, and says, “Audited!” “I am safe.” Nay, it even has a gratitude to Him who has borne the pain instead; a very low kind of affection; the same, differing only in degree, which young Peel felt for Byron when he volunteered to accept half the blows which a young tyrant was administering. The love which is only gratitude for escape from pain is a very poor love. It does not open the heart wide, and, accordingly, basing his hopes only on a *quid pro quo*, a sinner's penitence is half selfish, and has rarely in it any of that glorious *abandon* which, whether wisely directed or not, has so marked the Roman penitence, and which we explain away by saying it is work done to win Heaven by merit.

\* Hymn for Sunday next before Advent.

The Protestant penitent, *if* the system succeeds, repents in his arm-chair, and does no noble deed such as boundless love could alone inspire; he reforms, and is very glad that broken-hearted remorse is distrust of God, becomes a prosaic Pharisee, and patronizes missionary societies, and is all safe, which is the 'one great point in his religion.

The sentiment in Keble's last stanza is a true one—the "scattered fragments love can glean"—and it seems to me the idea I have been laboring for the last two or three Sundays to bring out is the real cause of the difficulty—does the sacrifice of Christ save me from the consequences of my sin? That question has two meanings; it may imply, does it break the connection between my sin and its natural result—pain, etc.? For instance, will it allow the spendthrift to remain rich after he has squandered all away—will it give back time lost to the idle man? The reply to that is, No. Look to its operation here. Most assuredly it leaves all the natural results in their unalterable order of sequence.

But the question may mean—Does the sacrifice save me from that which is worse than all pain, the feeling of God's wrath, the sense of banishment from the presence of His beauty and His love? The reply to that is, It does. Realize the spirit of the Cross—the surrender of self-will in love—feel, that is, believe, that God is love; in all the sharpest suffering feel that, and do you then ask if hell can be your portion? Can love endure hell? pain? yes; agony? yes; He did—hell, never. That is, you are redeemed—redeemed by love from remorse, from the disposition to repeat wrong, from the sense of God's displeasure; and the pain you bear is not taken away, but is transmuted. The spirit in which you bear it makes all the difference; it changes it from penal fire into wise, loving, corrective discipline; nay, makes it even the means, by its very present sharpness, of saving from future transgression, and consequently from future pain; and even the pain itself has a tendency, by the slow and healing results of time, to wear out and to become, like the memory of the lost, a sweet and blessed melancholy, passing into even deep joy. The whole question is, from what are we redeemed—from the penal consequences or moral consequences of guilt? I answer, from the moral, and through them eventually from the penal; but only the appropriation of the Spirit of the Cross redeems. Love transmutes all. This seems to me the answer to your question of some days back, when you asked about being saved, and yet suffering. I reply, salvation is goodness, humbleness, love. He who has them, not will be, but is saved, and all pain only makes him nobler, and gives him a higher heaven. If he says, "How unfair that I should suffer pain," it either shows that he is not yet saved, for he is living, not in love and trust, but suspecting God, or else it is equivalent to saying, "My soul can be made divine without suffering," which is just about as wise as to say we can have serene summers and heat without lightning.

### LXIII.

MY DEAR —, —I am very tired. I could scarcely instruct my class today; I have been so languid, that you must not be surprised if this letter exhibits in its replies the traces of a jaded mind that can not grasp its subject.

First of all, the twice-told tale of Keble's Sunday before Advent, and its being "use." Things new and old out of the treasure-house. Is the sunrise use? Suppose a child casts up a sum wrong ten times, and the hands get hot and the brain dizzy, what do you say? "Calm yourself, my child; take a walk round the garden, then sit still, resolve, wipe it all out, and try again, and I will sit beside you until you do it." I say to you, try again. As to the dream, let it be a spur and incentive to rouse and invigorate, not to terrify. You are not alone in this world; neither are you to begin again the scrupulously regular life which you have once found fail. Wait! Let

all come by degrees. Prescribe no ascetic rules nor self-invented ritual for yourself. That is law, and law only irritates.

Begin from belief and love, and do not coerce belief. Your mind is at sea. Be patient, you can not drift on the wide, wide sea forever; drifting on in one direction, you must come into a current of wind at last bearing towards some land. Be sure you are in His hand, not hated but loved. Do not speak bitterly of Him, nor mistake Him. Perhaps I was too severe on Shelley, but it was partly because I can make few allowances for deliberate enmity to God, though I may for not seeing Him; and partly because I fancied in many things he had done you injury. Let me say one word; do not begin with distasteful religious duties, long prayers, etc. Begin with the distinct moral duties. "If any one will do His will he shall know of the doctrine." Be simply a seeker of God and truth; and be sure you never can seek Him in vain. Then make yourself at rest about the end, death, and so on. You must not "make haste," to borrow a phrase from a prophet.

Now about the sermon. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" certainly was the cry of a human soul in sharp anguish oppressed with doubts and misgivings. What else could it be? Was He not tried in all points, like as we are? What could it be that suffered but a human soul? Deity is impassible. God was not angry with Him; God could not be angry with self-sacrificing love. He could not, without denying His own nature, annex Hell—that is, an evil conscience and remorse—to perfect goodness. Christ endured the penalty of imputed sin, the sins of others. But imputed sin is not actual sin, though constantly we see it bear the penalty of such—that is, be punished as such. "The chastisement of our iniquities was upon Him." It was not merely the "penalty of his own daring" that He bore. He bore the penalty of our transgressions. He crushed the head of the serpent, Evil, which would otherwise have crushed us, and the fang pierced Him. There is a parallel in the death of Socrates, so far as martyrdom goes; but His death was sacrifice, not merely martyrdom; Socrates was simply true to his convictions, and suffered for them. He distinctly came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. He alone, of all that are woman-born, conceived the idea of a contest with evil for the world's sake.

Many have conflicted with single forms of evil—that of their own country, that in their own profession—and in the conflict have been bruised; but He did battle with evil, not Jewish evil only, but the world's evil; evil in its manifold forms, grappling with it in its home; all evil. Socrates sanctified some kinds of the most horrible licentiousness; he was only a philosophical reformer. He came not to reform the Jewish Church or Jewish state; He had no system or plan of that kind, nor did He fall a martyr to any such scheme. It was the overthrow of sin for which He came, with a glance reaching over the ages. The *Son of Man*—*man's* Redeemer. It was not a sacrifice for a view or a truth, but for the truth. This answers the question, whether there are not some sins not at all of the nature of those which crucified Christ. There are none such. Sin is the genus of which a few particular manifestations are but the species. The will which has shaken itself free from God's will is the central principle of sin. It matters not whether this shows itself as hypocrisy, or cruelty, or falsehood, or licentiousness: it is part of the mighty principle of that kingdom whose prince had nothing in Christ. Perhaps in actual fact the first two of these had the chief hand in His destruction, but that was, so to speak, an accident, and not essential. Had He come into contact with Herod, He would have perished as the Baptist did, though the Baptist was only a martyr.

And again, "They who crucified Him hated Him, because their deeds were evil." What particular sins can you with certainty except from those evil deeds, and how could you be sure that any one such sin was not the

pose will always last, has in it no bitterness. I do respect that way of bearing blight. It is very beautifully put, I remember, in Wordsworth's "Founding of Bolton Priory:"

"What is good for a bootless bene?"  
 With these dark words begins my tale.  
 And their meaning is—whence can comfort spring  
 When prayer is of no avail?  
 "What is good for a bootless bene?"  
 The falconer to the lady said.  
 And she made answer, "Endless sorrow!"  
 For she knew that her son was dead.

Then comes her endurance, and she founds the Priory:

And the lady prayed in heaviness,  
 That looked not for relief;  
 But slowly did her succor come,  
 And a patience to her grief.  
 Oh! there is never sorrow of heart  
 That shall lack a timely end;  
 If but to God we turn, and ask  
 Of Him to be our friend.

Does your friend really think that the certainty of death in six months would not sound to her like a knell? Oh, no; be sure few really wish for death. Bad as life is, it is in the power of a single dream to make us feel that it is not death we long for:

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant;  
 More life and fuller, that we want;  
 No heart in which was healthful breath,  
 Has ever truly longed for death.

Several of —'s letters speak with wonder of the failure of his attempt to attain peace and goodness by the devoted life of regularity which he led for many years.

Let me suggest one hint on this which may become a living thought in your mind. No one can "attain to righteousness, if he seek it, as it were, by the works of the law." It matters not whether it be a ritual or daily duties. Mere unloving, untrusting regularity fails in producing goodness. Goodness comes not from death, but life. How could suspicions of God, seared feelings, and, to quote from heathenism, "the rancorous melancholy of one who possesses a noble longing of heart for a better faith, but proudly suppressed it," how could that soil nourish any thing that would bear sweet fruit, or branch into noble deeds?

Yet I can see that this stage, too, is necessary. The bitter, degrading law, deteriorating the heart, goes before the Gospel. We can not skip the seasons of our education. We can not hasten the ripeness and sweetness by a single day, nor dispense with one night's nipping frost, nor one week's blighting east wind.

My Advent subject is not yet fixed. I have been diving into reminiscences of the classics, and have been quite startled by things which I passed over formerly without reflection. One thing that has made me reflect much, has been the effect produced by sculpture on the Greeks. Those sublime works, of which fragments are to us like inspiration, were, by the judgment of heathens themselves, productive of a corruption of feelings and morals that is scarcely credible. I thanked God that we have not the treasures of Italy or the Continent; painting, too. And it is very singular to find how all the nobler heathen condemned the stage and the dance, and the poetry which answers to our romance — such men as Plutarch, Cato, Socrates, etc. One very impassioned passage in Plato, I remember, struck me when a boy — where he banishes all such things from his ideal republic; and all the soften-

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By-the-by, I have just read "Comus." What a noble poem that is! Shakspeare, of course, was the greater genius, but Milton was a sublimer man. How seraphically pure and elevated the atmosphere which he breathed! You feel the dignity of goodness in reading ten lines of what came from his soul! \* \* \*

I took my Keble in sorrowful and deep depression, which I had not felt till that minute. I sat meditating on the red embers in the fire, glowing with the history of years, as they so strangely do sometimes, till I lost myself in the wilderness of the past and future. Were I to prophesy, it would not be in Romeo's strain:

My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne.

I should say life is gathering all its fires for the last crisis—and there is nothing more. Nor do I think that exhaustion is the cause of this. \* \* \*

I find that suspicion has attached to the Training-School, in consequence of my connection with it. The instant I heard this, I wrote to the secretary to say that I understood such was the case, and that he was either a participator in the distrust, or else aware of it; that as I belonged to no party, I was quite ready for myself to share the distrust of all, the usual fate of those who stand alone, with not merely a negative but a positive line of thought and views; but that I would not for one moment involve the interests of a public institution in my fate. I, therefore, asked him to tell me straightforwardly and manfully whether such a feeling was experienced to his knowledge, that I might put an end to all difficulties at once, by resignation of the office which the bishop had asked me to take, and which I had not sought myself.

Such is my position. It can not last long. I only care to be true and open, without provoking unnecessary hostility.

A person of influence sent me a message, that if I would only avoid giving such strong opinions as those upon the Sabbath, I might count upon speedy preferment—to which I returned an answer, that the lord chancellor might give me the richest preferment in the land, but that he could not give me peace of conscience with it; that the world had nothing to give me which I cared for; that I held the true thing to be ever the safe thing in the long run; and that I could not turn one hair's-breadth out of my own path for royalty itself. I wish I could say these things less sternly, for I was conscious of saying on Sunday I threw myself on the indulgence of the congregation, being tired, in too haughty a tone. I know that this offends and shuts me out from sympathy in solitariness; yet I can not alter. It is not in me either to make or to desire to make a party, and my feeble, unsustained efforts are like buffets upon the wind. They watch by hundreds for my halting, and the mass of beings over whom I wield a temporary influence for a brief half-hour are only chained by fluency, held together as a column of sand is supported by the breath of desert wind. When that wind ceases it resolves into its atoms again.

#### LXV.

A long, stupid visit is just over. I do believe that there ought to be more interest in humanity and more power of throwing one's self into the mind of every one, so that no visit should appear dull. An Infinite Being comes before us with a whole eternity wrapt up in his mind and soul, and we proceed to classify him, put a label upon him, as we should upon a jar, saying, "This is rice, that is jelly, and this is pomatum," and then we think we have saved ourselves the necessity of taking off the cover; whereas, in truth, the Tory,

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I find that suspicion has attached to the Training-School, in consequence of my connection with it. The instant I heard this, I wrote to the secretary to say that I understood such was the case, and that he was either a participator in the distrust, or else aware of it; that as I belonged to no party, I was quite ready for myself to share the distrust of all, the usual fate of those who stand alone, with not merely a negative but a positive line of thought and views; but that I would not for one moment involve the interests of a public institution in my fate. I, therefore, asked him to tell me straightforwardly and manfully whether such a feeling was experienced to his knowledge, that I might put an end to all difficulties at once, by resignation of the office which the bishop had asked me to take, and which I had not sought myself.

Such is my position. It can not last long. I only care to be true and open, without provoking unnecessary hostility.

A person of influence sent me a message, that if I would only avoid giving such strong opinions as those upon the Sabbath, I might count upon speedy preferment—to which I returned an answer, that the lord chancellor might give me the richest preferment in the land, but that he could not give me peace of conscience with it; that the world had nothing to give me which I cared for; that I held the true thing to be ever the safe thing in the long run; and that I could not turn one hair's-breadth out of my own path for royalty itself. I wish I could say these things less sternly, for I was conscious of saying on Sunday I threw myself on the indulgence of the congregation, being tired, in too haughty a tone. I know that this offends and shuts me out from sympathy in solitariness; yet I can not alter. It is not in me either to make or to desire to make a party, and my feeble, unsustained efforts are like buffets upon the wind. They watch by hundreds for my halting, and the mass of beings over whom I wield a temporary influence for a brief half-hour are only chained by fluency, held together as a column of sand is supported by the breath of desert wind. When that wind ceases it resolves into its atoms again.

#### LXV.

A long, stupid visit is just over. I do believe that there ought to be more interest in humanity and more power of throwing one's self into the mind of every one, so that no visit should appear dull. An Infinite Being comes before us with a whole eternity wrapt up in his mind and soul, and we proceed to classify him, put a label upon him, as we should upon a jar, saying, "This is rice, that is jelly, and this is pomatum," and then we think we have saved ourselves the necessity of taking off the cover; whereas, in truth, the Tory,

Radical, Evangelical, gossip, flirt, or feather-brain are all new beings in the world: such a one never having existed before, each having a soul as distinct in its peculiarities from all other souls as his or her face is from all other faces. This seems to have been one great feature in the way in which our Lord treated the people who came in contact with Him; He brought out the peculiarities of each, treated each one as a living man, and not as a specimen of a labelled class, like the stuffed giraffes, cassowaries, humming-birds, and alligators you see in museums. Consequently, at his touch each one gave out his peculiar spark of light, and each one of the characters we have in the Gospels is distinctly himself, and no other — the representative, of course, of a class, but as distinctly marked off from all others of that class as the class itself is from all classes. What deep interest there would be in the most commonplace society, if we could associate with human beings in this wondering, inquiring way, exactly as the chemist interrogates every new subject by innumerable tests until he has discovered its properties and affinities!

I dined with — on Wednesday. Mr. A—— told me some interesting things about the unaffected simplicity of the queen dowager, and the deep religiousness of her character. Certainly it is a wonderful thing to remember how she steered through one of the most tangled portions of our history, giving no offense, dismissing all pomp, refusing to hold a court; and, by the simple power of spotless goodness, commanding an enthusiasm which has been rarely given to the most splendid achievements. I do not know that I have ever heard any thing so real as her funeral directions since the account of the death of Arnold.

#### LXVI.

I had a long conversation with Captain H—— about the Cape, where he has been recently quartered and engaged with the Kaffirs, whom he represents as nearer to animal existence than any thing he ever saw. They seem as lithe as serpents, and as capable of concealing themselves from observation on almost bare ground as a hare. On one occasion they came suddenly on a party of them sitting round a fire at breakfast. A Fingoe gave the alarm, and in a moment the Kaffirs threw themselves on all-fours on the ground, and glided in all directions, through the embers and bushes, so swiftly and tortuously that, though he put up his rifle and is a first-rate shot, he could not cover one of them, but was obliged to give it up and bring his rifle down. He knew those officers, of whose interception and murder you may remember the account in the papers some time ago. They were out foraging on ground so bare of grass, that though he rode over it an hour or two afterwards, he could see no place where a man could hide himself. On their return, four or five hundred Kaffirs, through the very midst of whom they must have ridden, suddenly started up and cut them off. They rode for their lives, and would have escaped, but that the horse of one, named Chetwynd, fell, upon which the others stopped, dismounted, and stood back to back, and being all armed with double-barrelled guns, sold their lives dearly. Seven Kaffirs were found dead, and others were carried off. Of themselves there were only five. They were soon overwhelmed with assagais; one was found pinned to the ground with an assagai through his cheek; another, who fought most desperately, was seized, and, as an honor, carried some yards off to a large stone, on which his head was cut off; the skull is now in the possession of a Kaffir chief in the form of a drinking-bowl. They paid, however, dearly for their success, for they were pursued, and two hundred of them hemmed in in the bush. The soldiers gave no quarter, and every one was cut to pieces.

On another occasion, while H—— and some of his men were at breakfast, a soldier exclaimed, and, looking up, he saw a Kaffir within twenty yards of



him on a knoll of ground, in the act of hurling his assagai. He stooped under a rock, and the assagai glanced over the point of it, and remained buried in the ground so close to a sergeant that the quivering end struck him. Looking up again, he saw the Kaffir stamping with rage at having missed. They rushed after him, as he was at the end of a very narrow bush or belt of wood. H—— sent twelve men each side of it to run down as fast as they could, and when he judged that they had outrun the Kaffir, who must be impeded by the trees, ordered them to turn, enter the bush, meet, and drawing a line across it, beat every foot regularly back to the point at which the Kaffir disappeared, as you would draw a cover for a fox. As he stood leaning on his rifle, expecting to hear the cry of discovery and shots, he saw slowly rising, within three yards of him, the Kaffir's black head and glittering eyes. He remained transfixed and fascinated for several minutes, the Kaffir glaring at him, and he not daring to raise his rifle, knowing that he would be off in a moment. However, his rifle went off by accident, and H——, in a fury, struck at the Kaffir with the butt-end with all his might. The stock broke, and the Kaffir disappeared. Up came the men at the sound of the shot, and searched the place for an hour in vain. He then went off, leaving three perdu behind at the spot where the savage had been seen. Scarcely had he got a quarter of a mile when three shots were heard—crack, crack! He ran back, and found that the Kaffir had put up his head again exactly in the same place, and again got off like the ghost of Hamlet's papa, not one being able to tell what had become of him.

I am going to dine with him again on Thursday, and shall hear more of these anecdotes. I do not know how it is, but they rouse me more than any thing of our civilized life. I do not mean this last story, for the poor wretch deserved to get off, and I should not like that kind of work. But the risk and excitement are more real than the being badgered by old maids of both sexes in a place like Brighton.

## LXVII.

I have this moment returned from dining with Captain H—— and hearing a long account of Kaffirland and incidents of Cape warfare. On the whole, they are very horrible, and make war more a matter of shambles than it appears in books. The Kaffirs torture all their prisoners. Our officers were tied up to the trees, and the young Kaffirs practised at them with the assagai, the mothers looking on and clapping their hands at a good shot. Some were flayed alive, others burnt with hot sticks; then there is a bullock-goad, a specimen of which he showed me—a favorite instrument of torture. Horrible as all this is, H—— said that they are not so ferocious as our English soldiers. A Kaffir one day pointed to one of the men in a state of intoxication, and then significantly to himself, saying, "You would make us like that." They treat our women, too, with delicate respect, which our men never imitate. H—— has seen a soldier deliberately place his musket to a woman's breast, that he might kill both herself and the child at her back with the same shot; the English officer, a subaltern, took no notice of this barbarity, and H—— was obliged to put him under arrest. Indeed, it seems that officers and men become brutalized there. He mentioned one colonel, at whom a Kaffir fired, and singed his face. The colonel knocked the Kaffir down, strode over him, and coolly took out his knife and jagged it across his throat, instead of stabbing or shooting him. From his account, I confess, I felt strongly on the side of the Kaffirs. They feel that they will become as degraded as Hottentots by being subject to the English. At present they do not drink, and have a much finer sense of honor than the brutal soldier.

For a long time it was a mystery where the Kaffirs got their arms and ammunition. At last, when the war was ended, the secret came out. Every

captured musket had the Tower of London stamp upon it; that is, the condemned muskets, which are bought up by merchants, had been shipped off to the Cape and sold to the savages. Nor did they ever want powder; steamers were fitted out by dealers at the Cape, and sent up the shore with ammunition. Can you conceive selfishness and treason of a darker turpitude than this? And the Kaffirs afterwards said, in Shylock's vein, "These be your Christian merchants!"

He showed me a number of colored drawings, vividly representing Kaffir life—one a very hideous but strangely fascinating one, in which an English officer, stripped to his shirt, is kneeling in the hands of the torturer, whose exultation and refinements in cruelty are diabolical.

This is man! and these things are going on, while we sit by our fireside and complain of *ennui*, or weariness, or religious persecution, or scandal, or some other trifling gnat-bite. There was a bundle of assagais, which H— showed me, of various kinds. It is about six feet long, taper, about as thick as your finger at the thickest part where the iron blade joins it, and feathering off like a reed at the other end. This they use on all occasions to cut their food, shape their pipes, gash their prisoners, and as a javelin, capable of being thrown a hundred yards with wonderful precision.

They are a fine, manly race of men, the women beautiful in figure, but all plain or ugly. I should except a few—an officer told me that one was the most beautiful woman he ever saw.

#### LXVIII.

Mists and darkness have shut out the sun to-day, but it has been close and warm. I have to-day arranged my time and occupations. From ten to eleven A.M. I mean to teach little Charlie geography; the hours before that I spend in my own studies, which for some time will be chiefly in works bearing upon Genesis, which I mean to study thoroughly, taking such books as Pritchard's "Physical History of Man," Wilkinson's "Egyptians," etc. At present I am working at Palfrey, an American, and two of the best Germans, who in all matters of research are immeasurably before the English—exhausting a subject. From eleven to one, similar occupation. Then I receive visitors or write letters. At fifteen minutes to three I hurry to the post. Three or four days in the week I have a class at the Training-School in ecclesiastical history—Daniel and St. John; then visits to sick—engagements—walk, etc.; dinner at six—listen to Charlie's prattle till eight, then study again till ten. Arrangements like these, however, are only capable of being kept in an approximating way, for accounts, interruptions, etc., sadly break in upon the best-arranged plan; but only in hard work, with the neck ever close to the collar, can I find any oblivion of thoughts that would be otherwise distracting.

Now let me give you something of the Book of Genesis.

The earlier part consists of extracts from two distinct documents, distinguished by the use of "God" (Elohim) and "Lord" (Jehovah).

Now the question is, Whence were the materials for this history procured? The answer is a very interesting one, but I believe I shall have to give it in the lecture which you will get. At present it is enough to say that it is almost certain that it was not from Egypt, but Chaldea, from whence Abraham came. For the Egyptian and Phœnician cosmogonies do not at all resemble that of Moses; whereas that of the Etruscans, derived from Chaldea, and that of Berossus, a Babylonian priest, singularly resemble it in important points. We might have almost expected this, from the story of the confusion of tongues, the scene of which is Babylon. It appears, therefore, that at the time when the Israelites left Egypt, and long after, the very accounts which were given to them by Moses were the ac-

counts taught and received by another portion of the human race, from whom they had been brought by Abraham and preserved for centuries. It seems that Moses committed to writing those parts which were chiefly calculated to be prefatory to his law, and to corroborate by an appeal to antiquity the great doctrines he was commissioned to teach—the unity of God and His moral government of the world, nations, and individuals—the religious parts of the tradition chiefly, and others which historically bore upon the foundation of the Israelitish commonwealth; as, for instance, those records which declared that the Canaan which he required them to conquer had been the property of their ancestors, that they had an hereditary right there, and that the present possessors were only usurpers.

This explanation of two documents will account for what must have often struck you—the repetitions which you find in many accounts, as of the Creation and Deluge, the going back every now and then to a point which had been passed, and tracing the same ground over again in different words, until the thread is taken up where it was broken off. You find two distinct accounts of the Creation: one in chap. i. to chap. ii. ver. 4; the other from chap. ii. ver. 4 to the end, beginning, “These are the generations,” etc., which is the common and well-known way of commencing a history. In these two histories there are even discrepancies of a trifling nature. For instance, in the first, man is created male and female at once. In the first, animals are created on separate days before man; in the second, chap. ii. ver. 19, they are created after man, and brought to him to name. The great points, however, are in both the same—the unity of God, the non-eternity of things as they are; and indeed the one supplements the other very materially.

## LXIX.

February 16.

I will put down a little anecdote for you, on Lady M——’s authority. The present Bishop of Glasgow, whom I know personally, is the son of a man of very large property. When a young man, he desired to enter the ministry, but his father objected on the ground that the duties of a clergyman were incompatible with those of a large landed proprietor, he being the eldest son. After a time, however, he made to him this proposal: he gave him permission, subject to the condition of his renouncing his rights of birth in favor of his younger brother. To this, after a consultation with Mr. Wilberforce, he agreed. Subsequently he was appointed to a large living, which partly replaced his pecuniary loss; but last year the bishopric of Glasgow, worth almost nothing, only a few hundreds—I think two or three—was offered him. Without hesitation, he made a second sacrifice, and now has one of the most laborious places in the kingdom. Does not this do one’s heart good? Tell it to —, and ask her whether I was wrong in saying that human goodness is no dream? The case contains nothing very grand; still, when you come to think of it, it is not an easy thing to exchange the position of a man of wealth for that of a hard-working country clergyman. And though this might be done once by a kind of mistake, in young enthusiasm, before life was known and the sacrifice appreciated, yet when it was repeated in mature age, with all the realities of past experience to make Quixotism impossible, I feel it was a thing which I should be glad to have the heart to do. It were far easier, I fancy, to lead a forlorn hope.

I walked to-day alone along the beach, and then round by the well-known corner under the bridge, and so home by the Dyke Road. The day was very bright, but a brisk wind ruffled the sea, and swept the sea-gulls, as if against their will, with twice their usual rapidity, across the waves. Hundreds of these birds were regularly hunting up and down one single large field, without going off from it for at least an hour that I watched them. Not having a

gun, I did not go up to them to ascertain what was the cause of their attraction ; but I suppose there must have been some sea-substance spread over the ground as manure. A large flock of Norwegian or hooded crows were mingled with them, and the distant hills were exceedingly distinct and clear, in that way which is often a prelude to rain ; but I have observed that wind has sometimes the same effect. The shadows of the clouds were very pretty, and the blue of both sky and sea fine ; the air bracing and exhilarating.

## LXX.

I did not forget my resolve, which I trust I shall not break through as a habit. I try to blend my will with His, to submit mine and merge it in His. Milton's lines—to Cyriack-Skinner—on his own blindness, floated across my mind, in which he speaks of not abating one jot of hope, nor arguing against Heaven's will, but steering right onward. I asked that I, and those dearest to me, might in all things unsophistically see the right, and do it.

I do not know that I have felt so softened and humbled for a long time as at the hour of prayer this morning ; more gentleness seemed to distill upon my soul than I have felt for a long time. I could have wept, not happy nor sanguine, but subdued and humanized tears. I do not know exactly why ; at least, it would take long to explain the train of thought. But it ran very little upon myself, or upon my own concerns. Wordsworth, in his account of the revulsion by which young disappointment passes into something resigned, and almost cheerful at last, speaks of a kind of sweet melancholy and repose found

In the soothing thoughts which spring  
Out of human suffering.

## LXXI.

I have just returned from spending the evening with the M——s. I took a long walk with —— to-day. She was brought up under Chalmers, but has a large and catholic mind, fresh, vigorous, overflowing with cheerful desires and efforts to do good, which she carries out on her own estate and everywhere—the secret of all happiness. I spent the evening alone with them, and felt refreshed ; a long conversation about confession, absolution, baptismal regeneration, and the modes of restoring peace and holiness after sin. She spoke of the excessive beauty of M——'s last volume of sermons ; I have not read them.

Your criticism about "There must be a will before there can be a law" is quite just. Our minds, by their very constitution, must conceive of a law as prior, not in point of time, but in point of order of conception, to the Eternal Will, in all moral questions. What I was alluding to, I suppose, was the laws of the physical universe, and I meant prior in point of time. Will decided that those and no others should be the laws which regulate matter. The Divine idea realized is the constitution of this universe, but that of course implies that the idea existed before the realization of it. All you say, however, is perfectly true, and most accurately thought.

The reply to the feeling about the temple of God in the universe, as contrasted with a London building, is a very long one. It would lead into all the questions about the place which belongs to the artificially symbolic in contradistinction to the naturally symbolic. I have no doubt that God has so constructed nature as to be an appropriate symbol of the Highest. I believe it has a sacramental power even. But then the harmony of mind with the All is a different thing, and less definite than the sense of harmony with living, imperfect human beings, struggling together towards God, sinful and weak, which is the idea of a church. The universe exalts, but I do not know that it distinctly elicits the consciousness of guilt—of dependence on

human beings, or of our great need of sympathy with humanity. Perhaps it rather repels us from mankind than attracts; and I believe one end of united worship is to bring feelings of this class into distinct consciousness. Of course that does not reply to the objection about flaunting congregations, etc. Only observe, that is an objection against display and vanity, and their unfitness for public worship—not an objection against public worship itself. “Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.” But this does not imply that the stalled ox itself is bad, or even that the herbs are better, only that they are preferable to the other with a certain addition, which neutralizes all its value. I do sincerely believe in the Temple of the Universe—its noble architecture, the music of its full choir of everlasting psalmody; and I am persuaded, especially to minds in certain states, nothing is more healing, or so healing. I hold it to be imperative on us to vindicate this great truth, that true worship may be given—ay, and most fitly suggested—there. Still I believe that lowlier but perhaps more really spiritual worship, because more fitted to fallen man, is to be found in a congregation of united adorers, which the other can not supersede.

## LXXII.

February 22.

I will tell you of a want I am beginning to experience very distinctly. I perceive more than ever the necessity of devotional reading. I mean the works of eminently holy persons, whose tone was not merely uprightness of character and high-mindedness, but communion—a strong sense of personal and ever-living communion—with God besides. I recollect how far more peaceful my mind used to be when I was in the regular habit of reading daily, with scrupulous adherence to a plan, works of this description. A strong shock threw me off the habit—partly the external circumstances of my life, partly the perception of a most important fact, that devotional feelings are very distinct from uprightness and purity of life—that they are often singularly allied to the animal nature, the result of a warm temperament—guides to hell under the form of angels of light, conducting the unconscious victim of feelings that appear divine and seraphic, into a state of heart and life at which the very world stands aghast. Cases of this kind came under my immediate cognizance, disgusted me, made me suspect feelings which I had hitherto cherished as the holiest, and produced a reaction. Nevertheless, the only true use of such a discovery is this, that our basest feelings lie very near to our highest, and that they pass into one another by insensible transitions. It is not true to take the tone so fearfully sounded in Tennyson’s “Vision of Sin,” nor that of Mephistopheles when he sneeringly predicts to Faust the mode of termination for his “sublime intuition,” after the soliloquy in the forest, when Gretchen’s image has elevated his soul. The true lesson is to watch, suspect, and guard aspirations after good, not to drown them as spurious. Wordsworth says,

True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the patient hour of silent thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself.

I feel the need of works of this kind, and I shall begin them again. The Tractarian school have felt and tried to administer to this craving by the publication of Romish devotional books, but of the most corrupted and erotic character. Our affections must be nurtured in the Highest, or else our whole life flags and droops. At present you are reading “Channing’s Life,” and will persevere, however discouraging his saintly elevation may be; for high thoughts and aims and feelings are caught by contact with the loftiest minds, far more than by any didactic discourses. Pray do not give up “Channing’s Life,” nor read it by starts, but consecutively, and, if possible, regularly every

day at a fixed hour. You must bear in mind, however, that his biographer's mind and tone of piety are immeasurably below his. The book is worth comparatively little, but the extracts are exceedingly valuable. I should not, however, say that devotionality was the characteristic of Channing's mind, so much as aspiration and adoration. Largeness of heart is more evident than warmth, and I have heard his writings characterized as cold; but it is a love which is too pure and translucent for the bubbling and turbid effervescence of an affection with which much that is earthly mingles. However, I am not sure that intellectual brightness does not make it too clear for love, which requires a kind of dim haze to live in, where the horizon, and the finite, sharp outlines of things are not discovered, and where imagination, by its own swell, conceives the infinite of love far better than the eye can exhibit it.

## LXXIII.

MY DEAR A——,—I am quite certain that all our expectations of peace in this world are delusive, except so far as we resolutely address ourselves to duty as it unceasingly presents itself in form after form. \*Otherwise, all soon gets disordered, and our hearts run rapidly down to discord. "Take my yoke upon you, \* \* \* you shall find rest for your souls." At present manifold perplexities are crowding upon you, and you would fain get away into a place of solitude, to escape the harassing and distressing calls. But you remember that when He went into the desert apart to rest awhile, the people followed Him, and He had all the perplexity of calculating numbers and provisions, how to provide loaves and fishes for the crowd who were dependent on him? I do not read that He threw off the responsibility, or called it and considered it beneath and unworthy of His divine energy. How very meekly and patiently He listened to the rule-of-three sum of five loaves and a few fishes—provision enough for one lad, but—for so many! And then the arrangement and marshalling of them all—ranks of fifties, and hundreds, and thousands—Divine expedients to meet temporary deficiencies and past improvidence. Surely something of that spirit is available in somewhat similar emergencies, if the miraculous part of it can not be repeated. Who can tell how your destiny may be bewildered or brightened according as you meet this emergency truly to yourself and God, or shrink from it in a way that is not courageous? He was tempted to escape duty and long toil by some sudden act of rashness, and to choose plenty and enjoyment instead of a rock-pillow and fidelity to commonplace, unromantic needs and occupations; but He felt the reality of a higher life within, nurtured, not by solaces, but God's presence, and He chose to wait rather than faithlessly distrust.

## LXXIV.

This afternoon I received a packet which touched me a good deal: it was a——book, sent from——by a gentleman, who once came to me in great anguish after a sermon in Trinity Chapel, which had struck home and revealed to him the inevitable results of the line of conduct he was pursuing. I did not know he had left the country. It appears that the warning was in vain; all his earthly happiness is and must be wrecked forever, and he has quitted England, I should conceive, never to return. The inscription on the title-page, in Latin, is as follows:

In memory of a warning,  
Given, how benignly,  
Forgotten, how evilly,  
Mourned, how vainly,  
Ended by ruin, how entirely!  
Given by Infelix.

And that is all I know of the concluding history of one of the saddest tales

of an unregulated heart I ever heard, or perhaps shall ever know. I shall write, but to what purpose?—words, idle words—the whole realm of Chatterdom is worth nothing—noise and smoke, nothing else. The babble of little birds round the unaltered flight of a hawk, which moves majestically on, do they stop the death or ruin which is before him? I trow not. Eloquence, rhetoric, impressive discourses, etc., etc., etc.—soft gliding swallows, and noisy impudent tom-tits—is the true worth of the first orator in the world. I believe I could have become an orator, had I chosen to take the pains. I see what rhetoric does, and what it seems to do, and I thoroughly despise it. I think it makes people worse instead of better; exposes the feelings to tension, like the pulling constantly of a spring back, until the spring loses its elasticity, becomes weak, or breaks; and yet, perhaps, I do it injustice: with an unworl'dly noble love to give it reality, what might it not do?

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I have translated a few more of Lessing's paragraphs for you. In order to understand them, I must explain to you, very briefly, Warburton's system, which he partly admits and partly refutes. Warburton published a book entitled "The Divine Legation of Moses." The argument of the whole, well sustained by immense learning, but much erroneous reasoning, was this: Warburton saw no doctrine of future life in the Old Testament—this is only true, however, of parts, of which the Pentateuch is certainly one; he concluded from this that Moses must have had miraculous power to substantiate his claims as a Divine messenger. Mohammed, for example, may have passed for one, and yet be an impostor, because his promises were to be fulfilled hereafter, and could not be tested here. He appealed to superstitious hopes, etc., and had thus a hold upon the present life; but a lawgiver, who appealed to no future sanctions and only to present ones, must have been true in his predictions of those present ones—Divine interference, etc., etc.—because they could be tested every day. If he told the Israelites that they passed through the sea dry, and that their shoes had not worn out; if he threatened disobedience with wondrous penalties, the Jews could try his credentials on the spot; but as they recognized these credentials, Warburton held that miraculous power must have been there.

LXXV.

There is no excellence in me to kindle excellence—there is nothing, absolutely and literally nothing, true and good. Something, perhaps, which a superior being might mournfully and gently look upon and recognize as the germs of a once-possible—perhaps still in the eternities possible—excellence; but after years remaining rudimentary still, more or less dry and withered. A common gardener would require a very powerful microscope indeed to detect the smallest symptom of remaining life, and that, perhaps, the Chief Gardener could only see in a certain capacity of intense hatred for certain forms of wrong, somewhat, however, of the acescent kind, hot and bitter. Hatred for wrong is a kind of life, but there is little of the sanguine love and hope for good left.

I am truly rejoiced to find that you are beginning to feel the beauty and power of such writers as Newman and Channing. I think you will by degrees acknowledge the genius of the latter. It is simple, as all genius is, and not so striking as the splendor of Macaulay's diction, but far deeper if it be true, "que les grandes pensées viennent du cœur."

I read a melancholy story to-day. A young English lady, who had been sent from Australia to finish her education in England, was returning to her parents, when the vessel was wrecked, and all the party with whom she was, except herself, was slain. She was taken prisoner by the natives, and has been forced to live with them ever since. She has been seen more than

once, vigilantly attended by a black. She is hurried away instantly when the whites are seen. All efforts hitherto to penetrate the forest and discover her have been unavailing. The Australian savage is almost lower than the Bosjesman in the scale of humanity. Conceive such a lot for a refined and educated girl. Poor, poor thing! I should like to be in Australia. In my present mood, I would lead the forlorn hope in search of her; I would not recommend any black to come within reach of my rifle. How much better a virgin grave in the Atlantic would have been for her!

\* \* \* \* \*

I have finished Lessing for you, in order that you might have it all complete on Sunday morning. The latter part is merely an old speculation about our pre-existence, as old as Pythagoras, dimly suspected by Plato, hinted at by Tennyson in the "Two Voices," and a fancy, I suppose, which has occupied some minutes of all our lives. You will take it as a fancy, nothing more. It can neither be proved nor disproved. Still, even in the apparent absurdities of some minds there is more that is instructive than in the wisdom of others. The whole piece is valuable, chiefly as suggestive; it is crude and imperfect; but it gives large glances into God's world and the life of man as a whole, and after all does not err in putting in too much details, or in shading too much the grand sketch.

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"Extroitive" is a coinage of Coleridge.\* "Introit" is a musical word, meaning an entrance. Extroitive means that which goes from within abroad. Introitive, applied to a character, would mean one which is exactly the reverse. Thus extroitive, in his mode of application, describes a character which considers the outward consequences of moral evil chiefly, shrinking from them, and penetrates less to the heart and kernel of the matter—shuddering at the deformity of evil in and for itself. From this he draws the conclusion that women are less hypocrites to their own minds than men, because they do not often pretend to themselves to be guided by principle, nor use sophistry to make their acts square with right. It is quite sufficient for such a mind to say, "It was necessary to do wrong; or else—" Consequently, women are less veracious than men; dereliction from truth being a slight thing to them in comparison of having to endure the consequences of speaking it. In other words, they feel a necessity above right—a fearful thing to feel. I believe this is a correct exposition of what Coleridge means. I am afraid, however, it explains Shakspeare where Coleridge himself puzzles over him in the conclusion of his "Notes on All's Well that Ends Well," respecting Helena's conduct.

## LXXVI.

March 9.

Lord Langdale has pronounced, at last, the judgment of the Privy Council in *Gorham vs. Bishop of Exeter*. The decision, in which the Council, with the exception of Knight Bruce, were unanimous, with the approval of the two archbishops, and the disapproval of the Bishop of London, is to the effect that Mr. Gorham's views are not contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England. The arguments are very temperate and wise, and, I think, unanswerable. If you have the paper, pray look at the quotations from our great divines at the close of the judgment; they are decisive, I think, that Mr. Gorham's opinions are at least honestly tenable in the Church of England. I do not agree with Mr. Gorham any more than I do with the bishop, and I think, on the whole, the bishop's views are less likely to undermine Christianity than Mr. Gorham's; for the former at least acknowledges all

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\* See Coleridge, "Lectures on Shakspeare," etc., p. 114.



Christians as God's children, whereas the latter only uses it in the judgment of charity—"consider a man honest until he is proved a rogue"—which in common life does not make us feel particularly at ease when we are going through a crowd with money or jewels on us. Nor does it, practically, much satisfy the good people that those around them are Christians, whatever they may say in the judgment of charity, which is especially restricted to the baptismal font. The common expression among them is, Is he a Christian? Now, with all my heart I love our service for pronouncing, as St. Paul does, "That all who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," that is, are Christians. Baptism is the grand special revelation to an individual by name, A, B, or C, of the great truth Christ revealed for the race, that all, Greeks and barbarians, are the children of God. It is the fact which they are to believe—a fact before they believe it—else how could they be asked to believe it? Faith does not create the fact, it only receives it. Baptism is the visible declaration of this, saying, "Now, remember you are a child of God, from henceforth live as such." I accept gladly the expression of the Catechism, "My baptism, wherein I was made a child of God," etc.—*made*, as the queen is made queen at her coronation. She was queen before; nay, if she had not been queen, coronation could not make her queen; it could not make Lady Jane Grey queen. Baptism could not make me a child of God, unless I were one by reason of my humanity already. To live as such—to believe it and realize it—is to become regenerate. The bishop says that baptism makes a child of God, in the wrong sense that it creates him such, transforms him, which is magic. Still, without disputing how a child became a Christian, the bishop would agree with me in this, that the child is henceforth to be treated as a temple of the Holy Ghost, in which way St. Paul treated all Christians baptized, even though guilty of flagrant crimes. "Whether you believe it or no, you are temples of God, as such holy; if any man pollute the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Does not the sin consist in this—in denying that they were God's children, and living as if they were not such? Whereas Mr. Gorham, who holds that this magical efficacy takes place, but only in some cases, leaves the whole truth of Christianity maimed and disfigured, and brings us back to the spirit of the Jews and the Pharisees. "I am a child of God in virtue of something not general, like baptism, but special and personal, as feelings, opinions, etc. You are a publican, a Gentile, one of the world, in short"—and then what has become of Christianity?

I have been asked in many directions to publish my sermon on Baptism, which seemed to strike nearly every body in a new light, being not a *via media*, or cautious attempt at steering between two extremes, but a larger truth which absorbs them both, and annihilates their respective errors. I have not yet quite decided. Next Sunday I shall preach again on the same subject, with further elucidations.

## LXXVII.

I have been interrupted by two long visits—one a pressing request from the Athenæum to lecture. I refused. The other, a visit from the sister of a Quaker, who has applied to me for baptism in consequence of the sermon of last Sunday, and a series of impressions produced in Trinity during some months past.

I find the two sermons on Baptism have made an impression, in some cases producing great dislike, but in others producing thought, and appearing to shed light on what had before been dark. So far I have reason to be grateful. I am nearly determined, however, not to publish, at all events for some time. If I should, it will be in another form, with the whole recast and remoulded.

You must not ever permit yourself the use of that word "Too late!" Alfieri, when did he begin to study? Shakspeare, when did he leave off deer-stalking and dissipation? He was thirty before he wrote his first poem. Thomas Scott began Hebrew at fifty-six. I do not see what is the use of striking experience if it can not be applied, and if time can ever be "too late." Too late, of course, for any of us to undo the past, but not too late from the past to make the future and present wiser and better than they would have been with our often-bitter past experience.

*A propos* of prison-house vegetation, etc., Silvio Pellico composed his "Memoirs" in prisons, the only materials offered for which were created by a fresh living habit of observation. Do you remember how he contrived to make for himself a life of thought out of the transient visits of the plain uninteresting daughter of his jailer, by simply cultivating a healthy interest in all that is human and has life? Do you forget the story of Picciola? Do you know where the best book which Spain has given to the world, "Don Quixote," was written? By a one-armed man, whose other arm was lopped off in a dungeon. Oh, be assured that what they call the means of grace are like the means of travelling—very good for getting fast over the ground without exertion, with the assistance of others, but not so good for developing inward muscular energy. A languid lady behind her four grays may look contemptuously on the pedestrian who is struggling along the dusty high-road, and making small progress in comparison—that is, of her horses—but in comparison with her! — gets on very fast with the assistance of — in knowing all about God and the spiritual life; but in respect of thinking for himself, getting power to stand alone and lead a John-Baptist life in the wilderness, with no means of grace, sermons, gifted ministers to commune with, why I think — had much better go to Juan Fernandez at once, and try to find out how much he has in him of his own; of what stuff he is made, and how, alone, he can front the everlasting Fact, and feel at home in it. A student of medicine, listening to a clinical lecture by the bedside of a patient, learns a great deal about muscles, nerves, and names; but I fancy a feeble attempt in great pain to stagger across the floor of the hospital, teaches more of the practice of health and use of the muscles than all the clinical lectures in the world. Crutches are capital for locomotion, but for strengthening the limb which they save from the ground, until its bulk becomes flaccid, not very capital, I guess. No; rely upon it, the spiritual life is not knowing, nor hearing, but doing. We only know so far as we can do; we learn to do by doing, and we learn to know by doing: what we do, truly, rightly, in the way of duty, that, and only that, we are. Sermons are crutches—I believe often the worst things for spiritual health that ever were invented.

## LXXVIII.

Thursday, March 21.

Now, to reply to your remark on the view of baptism which I gave. You ask why the Church of England calls a child, previous to baptism, a child of wrath, if baptism merely recognizes the fact of it being a child of God. Baptism does not merely recognize the fact; it reveals it, as a fact unknown, and previous to the knowledge of which the child or man can not be called regenerate. One who is by right a child of God lives, in fact, a child of wrath, pursuing the path to certain misery by sin. Was not the younger son in the parable his father's child really and truly, whether he lived as such or not; but was he not also a child of wrath, and what good did his relationship do him until he recognized it and claimed its rights? In truth, and in fact, he may be said to have then really, in a figurative sense, for the first time, had power to become a son. Yet that power rested upon a fact which was quite independent of his moods and feelings. I would use, with all my heart,

both expressions of our formularies : a child of wrath before baptism made a child of God by baptism ; and yet I would earnestly maintain that baptism could only make the child such, in virtue of its being by right, not by recognition, such before.

To all practical purposes, the fact is valueless until revealed, just as a child of a sovereign might be living as the son of a pirate, if he had been kidnapped and did not know his parentage ; but all the value of the revelation depends upon the circumstance that it is the revelation of a fact, and not the demand of a sentiment, nor the performance of a miracle, nor the fabrication of a new relation. For instance, the kidnapped pirate—what would be the power of a message declaring him a royal child ? None, except the power of a fact. Adoption by a stranger would be nothing, nor could it make him heir to a throne. Still, you will observe that without that message the fact would be profitless, and he never could have inherited the kingdom. Would you not say, rightly, that he was the son of piracy before, but that the message had made him heir of a kingdom ; and this not as a *façon de parler*—you would be speaking of a reality. Baptism is such a reality ; God's missive to an individual, bearing a name, personally, specially directed as a superscription—I baptize thee, A, B, C.

I believe this will remove all difficulty about the Thirteenth Article. What can be the value of an outlaw's deeds, voluntarily outlawed, refusing his father's laws, spurning his father's home, and living in the original sin—the fountain-guilt of denying by every act his likeness and relationship to God, refusing by his life to be His child, and leading, therefore, not a life of truth and fact, but, as St. John says, the life of one who is a liar, and does not the truth, to whom Christ came as one of His own, and he received Him not ?

Cornelius's alms, etc., were not looked upon as sins, you say. No ; and the Article does not say that acts done with the inspiration of God's Spirit are sins, but those that are done without. Now, St. Peter expressly declares that Cornelius had the Spirit, and therefore he baptized him. He had, in fact, been living long under its influence, which Peter was astonished to find. What is the Spirit of Christ ?—that whereby we cry *Abba, Father* ; and surely we could not say the deeds are good which are done in an opposite spirit.

The more I study the Prayer-Book the more I am convinced that no other view will explain its words, and the more do I feel their preciousness, of which the Dissenters would rob us. I would not give up one sentence which it contains upon the subject. I would far rather hold the Romanist than the dissenting Evangelical vulgarisms upon the subject. And, indeed, practically, I fancy there would be little difference between my teaching on this point and that of a Tractarian, except in the dark view they necessarily take of the quenching of a baptismal spark by sin, to be rekindled only by tears, etc., etc., etc. I should touch on the ground they do. You are a child of God, claim your privileges ; you may lose them else forever ; “ a child of God,” and baptism is your assurance of it, not your feelings, which are sanguine to-day and depressed to-morrow, but the one baptism. Only he would say, in baptism you were miraculously manufactured into God's child. I would say, by baptism was revealed to you a truth which by nature you could not have.

I do not agree with you about the Jesuitical character of our Church and its services. I believe the Articles are open Articles. I do not think it impossible for men holding very different views to be able to sign them except a rabid Dissenter ; even a Calvinist might—of course not a Quaker.

Do study the services in this spirit, and see whether they do not proclaim most blessed truths—that all are God's children, *de jure* but not *de facto*—that there must be a separate body—a church differing from the evil world,

though the world itself ought to be, and one day will be, "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

You are quite right in saying that the argument against God waiting to send down His Spirit would hold with equal force against prayer. Of course, if prayer could dictate to God time and place, or if it left no alternative to God to grant or not, which the Romish doctrine presumes, or if God never answered prayer except in the way which it prescribes, or if He never gave, except in answer to prayer, as Rome says in reference to baptism, or if the fact were not that prayer is the voice of the Spirit of God himself within us, and the reply, therefore, an answer to himself (Romans viii. 26, 27). God does not wait on a man for his claim of the promise, to the last, because He gives the Spirit before he prays. Is not prayer spiritual life, whether it be in words or in aspirations?

## LXXIX.

The weather for the last ten days has been bright and clear, but a piercing northeast wind has made all outdoor work wretched, and appears to pepper the mouth and throat with invisible cayenne and sands of the desert. To-day it has come down in hail and snow. Probably, when it does change, we shall have genial summer all at once with startling contrast.

I have been very hard at work lately, with almost no time for reading or writing. Next week service every day, and two sermons on Good Friday, will abridge my time sadly, besides constant occupation in preparing pupils at the Training-School for Government examination in the ensuing week. To-day I scarcely know where to turn, so much must be done before night. To-morrow morning I mean to take Luke xi. 1, and preach on Unconscious Influence. The disciples saw their Lord praying, and asked to be taught. So also St. Peter went straight to the sepulchre, and St. John, who had hesitated before at the door, went in after, indirectly and unconsciously influenced by that act. All life is a history of the power of involuntary unconscious influences like these. Our conscious influence is the result of intention, and, on the whole, does little; but our unconscious influence is the aggregate result of our whole character, manifesting itself in words, looks, acts, that are not meant to effect any thing, but which inevitably mould others. Our conscious and intentional influence may fail or may be false, but our involuntary is inevitable, and every moment operative, and must be true. This is the leading thought which I mean to work out; but having a violent cold, my mind is somewhat dull and unfit for work.

It is not an enviable feeling, nor do I think there is much that is enviable in the feeling of any great duty. The luxury of doing good is sentimental trash and self-contradiction. How can any duty be done with ease? Is not all our life—our lower life, at least—a miserable and fruitless attempt to reconcile the indulgence of our low desires for a summer holiday with the infinite and ever-increasing calls of conscience and law? Is not all our higher life a perpetual struggle to reach a horizon of duty, which is unbounded and ever-widening before us, as we fulfill its claims? Two things have brought this powerfully before me—one is the instruction of little Charlie, which has made me rouse myself to feel how much is to be done, and how fearful failure is; the other the meditation upon John x. 17, 18, on which I preach to-morrow—that sublime law of our humanity, as of His sacrifice, converted into blessedness by the truth that it is rendered to love, not hard necessity: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because," etc. Oh! shall we not try, cheerfully and sweetly, to take up this law, not as our severe obligation, but as our glorious gain? Let youthful freshness pass, worn looks come; and in me they are coming fast, and will come faster. What matter if, as the outward perish, the inward is renewed day by day? What matter if we see it in

those that are dearest to us—if we know that in them, too, the same glorious reproduction is taking place?

What Channing says about intellectual cultivation not injuring moral character among the poor is true and not true—true, inasmuch as eventually, of course, things must find their level, but not true if he meant to say that the cultivation of the understanding alone improves character. I say it makes a bad character worse by multiplying power.\* It is, of course, right to strengthen physical fibre, and he who refused it for fear of giving bad men the upper hand would talk absurdly; but he would be quite right in saying that mere cultivation of strength—albeit a gift of God's, to scorn which would be a reflection upon the wisdom of the Creator—only increases a bad man's power of evil. I say that though in the long run, perhaps after centuries of anarchy and blood, mental cultivation given alone will result in moral good, yet in the meanwhile, and for the present, the harvest will be bitter fruit and ranker villainy. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity buildeth up." Cultivated understanding has no necessary connection with strengthened, much less purified Will, in which moral excellence lies, and in which alone Bacon was

The wisest, greatest, meanest of mankind.

I do not want a greater proof of the truth of this than in what is going on, perhaps this moment, or, at all events, a couple of hours ago, in the Institution. Practised disputants and sharpened intellects, these working-men have learned to deride God and trample upon the simplest and first principles of right and wrong. No, no, clear ideas do not advance the soul one step towards the power of doing what is right. It is a great thing when we learn that to understand, and appreciate, and even feel truth is not one atom of power given to the will to be true. The discipline of habits and acting does this, as old wise Aristotle long ago saw: we "become good by doing good," not by moral treatises, for goodness is the habit of the will, not perceptions or aspirations.

It seems to me no reflection on the wisdom of the Creator, that intellect cultivated alone will make the poor bad members of society. Any quality cultivated alone must destroy the harmony which the Creator intended, and produce a monster, in which part has the proportions of a giant, part the stunted withered limbs of a dwarf—a hideous unnatural whole. Look at a *nisi prius* lawyer, with clearest notions of evidence, principles of law, etc., etc., and withal how much sometimes of personal meanness and hatred, of pettifogging and professional lying!

I am not quite sure what Byron means by the tenth stanza. Probably he did not quite know himself, for I should scarcely suppose he would say, in genuine and contrite humbleness, "that the thorns which he had reaped were of the tree he planted." Perhaps it was truer than he meant, for all that vapid, sated, weary feeling, which he describes, was but the inevitable consequence linked to a life of excitement and indulged passion. I fancy that awful description of Tennyson's in "The Vision of Sin" would truly describe his latter state, or, at all events, that state to which he was on the high-road, had he lived long enough. The hideous pleasantries of "Don Juan" is a tolerably near approach to it, with a skepticism, more than incipient, of the goodness of others, and of those feelings which had once seemed half-divine, and strangely ended, like the fabulous mermaid beautiful above, in debasement and animalism. Yet I sometimes have thought "Don Juan" was a symptom of amelioration, inasmuch as it was a symptom of reaction. All these feelings, which he once reckoned romantic and sublime, had conducted

\* Channing expressly guards against this objection in his essay "On the Elevation of the Working-Classes."

him—where? Consequently, those hideous sneers at fine feeling bespake the arrival of a moment in which he could be no longer deceived by feelings, the end of which he distinctly saw. Unhappy enough to come to a state in which one can sneer at feelings purest, holiest, early feelings, but better than that other eternal delusion!

I send you a paper giving you an account of the Phèdre. Do you not think it is utterly horrible to depict vividly the struggle of an incestuous passion on the stage? Do look over this, and think whether — could possibly be allowed to see such a representation. I meant to have brought it to you, if you had not sent for it; to show you what it is: indeed, the heathen story itself is awful. Only fancy a woman exhibiting herself on the stage to men who are imagining her, with all those storms of convulsed and agitated expression, under the influence of a passion such as it should not be supposed a woman could conceive! Even any passion is a dreadful thing to exhibit, terribly resisted, and terribly victorious; but such an one as this! Could any girl or woman understand with sympathy the beauty of the piece, and not be morally forever the worse for it? Do read it over, and see how atrocious it must be exactly in proportion as it is powerfully and well represented.

LXXX.

September, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,—Not knowing your designation and address, I must apologize if I have erred in the superscription of my letter to you.

It gives me great pleasure to find that the little address which has fallen into your hands has awakened any interest or sympathy.

The passage you refer to (page 17), “To believe in God is simply the most difficult thing in the world,” is, I think, true. By God, I mean God as he is; not a first cause, nor a machinist, *Creator Mundi*, but One whose name is love immanent to us, meaning good and not evil, and having a right to our supreme adoration and reverence. I do not believe that the understanding can discover Him. Paley’s argument from design is valuable for those who vaguely feel Him, in order to give a stable, solid ground for mere feeling to rest on—valuable also in defense of religion, as showing that it has something to say for itself, and forcing the intellectualist to treat it with courtesy; but for proving God’s existence, or demonstrating to one well-informed infidel the falsity of his opinion, I believe it ever has been, and ever must be, powerless. For instance, it does not even touch the arguments of a pantheist.

There may be a First Cause, intelligent, designing, etc., and his name, if you like, may be God; but *so far* I only believe in him as I believe in electricity, gravitation, or any other cause, which assuredly has a great deal to do with my destiny. Believe, in the sense of trust, I do not. In morals we only believe so far as we *are*. Rochefoucauld believed in no principle of action beyond selfishness and vanity. How could goodness, generosity, etc., be proved to him? By what evidence? There were the acts before him in history and human life proving design. Rochefoucauld, being vain and selfish, could not believe beyond, or make any thing of such proofs. In opposition to the hypothesis of an intelligent Creator, I confess that the hypothesis of the Epicurean, or the Stoic, or the Pantheist, is at least able to make a long fight—far too long to infallibly secure victory in the limits of a life of thought. I do not think that where such men as Laplace, D’Alembert, Hume, Voltaire, have never seen any demonstration, the understanding can be the real court of appeal. Nay, I am ready to acknowledge that of the intellectual conception of God as Creator, Cause, Immanent Life, Lord of the World, etc., I am not prepared to assert or deny any thing—I know nothing. My understanding feels itself utterly bewildered. I can affirm the contradictory, as well as the assertion, of any of these theories; and if I were compelled in intellectual

gladiatorship to surrender them all, I should not feel in the smallest degree dismayed. My God is not the philosopher's god; and in the most vigorous graspings of the intellect, I am often conscious of most losing hold of the Lord of right and love.

The evidence of goodness and wisdom in the external world is very questionable, in some moods at least. I found a caterpillar the other day writhing in anguish, and perforated by a dozen maggots, which had come from the eggs of an ichneumon-fly. It penetrates the skin of the living animal, leaves its eggs, and the grubs eat the creature alive by degrees. Is that goodness? Wonderful contrivance, certainly; but I should not accuse the understanding of any one who preferred to believe in the Fate of the Stoics necessitating this, rather than an Omnipotent Will. I know that with the doctrine of the Cross, and the glimpse which it gives us into the grand law of the universe—Sacrifice, conscious and unconscious, for the life of others—this does not startle; but I profess that I have never yet found the argument from the understanding, or a hint of it, which can make it pleasant to believe in a God who has made such a provision as this.

Nor do I think that we get at the feeling through the understanding.\* A slave is dependent on his tyrant master. A child depends upon his parent from day to day. But you may exhaust all your logic in proving to either that he must depend, or ought to depend; and at the end of all, you may be very far indeed from making one step towards the production of that "consciousness of dependence," which is implied in the words, "I believe." You can demonstrate power, but the master's right to enforce, the parent's love in requiring obedience—what arguments prove those when the will rebels? I am not sure that in this brief addition to the sentence of the address I have elucidated my meaning much; if not, I should be very happy to reply to any difficulties you may find in admitting my assertions.

I met an intellectual man in the train, who, after a good deal of conversation about Carlyle, Sir Robert Peel, etc., broke into, "I heard a very extraordinary man yesterday in Brighton," etc., etc. To which I replied, "I think I ought to stop you," after he had pronounced the name. He then looked me in the face, colored, and said, "But where is the voice that was so tremulous? you are not the same man?" Then he began to tell me what he had romanced about me—how happy (he said to his wife) I must be in having chosen that profession, in preference to any other, with such a temperament, daring and sensitive, etc., etc. Alas! how little can human beings read each other. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddeth not;" yet after all, why "Alas!" Is it not better that it should be so, than that our inmost soul should be legible to all? In this respect it seems to me that Sir Robert Peel was peculiarly happy and wise. Men complained that he kept them in the dark, that they had not the slightest conception of what he was preparing to do or thinking of. Of course if a great mind is to become communicative and intelligible to every small mind, the wisest plans would be abortive, and the maturest counsels dashed by time and tide. If a man see farther than his generation, his views must appear horrible to them; the only thing he has to do is to keep them until sufficient numbers are on his side to realize them. Unquestionably this is a proceeding of the highest mind; suppose he let us into his counsels beforehand? Why, even to Abraham, the intelligence being antedated by a single day, the act is unintelligible, and he does all he can to thwart it. The great difficulty is to do this without duplicity; for in an honorable mind and a true one it is wisdom veiling itself in mystery; but in a crooked one it is mere cunning. Take Christ's life for an example. Who knew what He meant to do? Not even John, much less the world.

\* He adopts Coleridge's sense of the word, Understanding.

I have just returned from Lord Lansdowne's. Some people, whose names I could not catch, dined with us. He told a rather good story of Rogers. Francis, the author of "Junius," was present. Rogers turned to him, and said, "Sir Philip, may I ask you one question?" Every one supposed it was one bearing on the authorship. Francis fiercely replied, "At your peril, sir." Upon which Rogers quietly turned away, and said in an undertone, "There spoke Junius Brutus." He talked to me alone a long time after dinner about Ireland, etc.

## LXXXI.

Till this visit to Mr. V——, I never estimated the advantages which the residence of streets opposite the sea have. The exceeding beauty, freshness, and appearance of the sea and the sky in the early mornings, so different from the commonplace look of midday, have struck me very much. Mid-day is like mid-life, full of commonplace, of toil, and with less of romance; with most people at least. Morning and evening correspond with youth and age, in both of which there is a peculiar poetry. Yet to the eye that is open to see it, the midday and middle life have a wonder and mystery of their own; that is, to those who will look at either horizon, east or west—for the sun is above, unseen then, and only visible at the other periods—which, I take it, is the reason why the heavenly wonder seems to have passed from that period. "Heaven lies around us in our infancy," and I suppose the mystery of the grave brings heaven again round our decadence, just as the sun approaches the horizon again at evening. There is something more than fancy in this, for we are so constituted, that the analogy is felt by all of us. Morning, spring, youth—the feelings in them resemble each other, and re-suggest each other; so in autumn, evening, and age. And I fancy, that to get the uncommonplace feeling in the middle period, we must look up and remember that the light which lights us, with such a glare on the world and earth, is just as mysterious and sublime as when we saw all its tender pulses quivering in the morning.

I never, I think, felt the freshness of the world, and the truth that every morning is a new day—a universe unbroken and fresh for effort and discovery—so much as two mornings ago by the sea-side. I do not mean that, even for a moment, it gave a conception of a fresh career or burst in life for me, but only that it gave me a conviction of a fact. To-day all is changed, but again I feel the advantage people here have from seeing the innumerable moods in which the sea presents itself. The wind is driving and moaning wildly—the sea all white on the beach—dark and cleft into grand chasms beyond—and almost lost in not a dense but a semi-transparent mist towards the horizon; the carts and flies which go past the dining-room window are seen, as I sit, low down, as if they were on the brink of a precipice; large gulls, with their wild, strange scream, heard every now and then, as they go down perpendicularly to the surface of the wave that has brought up their food, or floating about on the mist, colorless like shadows—"And I would that my tongue could utter—The thoughts that arise in me." For at this moment my heart is in perfect unison with all this scene. I look and look, until I wish I had no will. Yet the loss of will, with all the other faculties—memory, conscience, fancy—remaining, is surely the very condition of insanity; for the will alone keeps them from discord. I am not miserable, however. This soothes me. Am I justified, however, in all this utterance of egotistic sentiment? Feeling which ends in itself, and leads to nothing, ought to be stifled. It is not romance. Romance is—

Imagination: honorable aims,  
Free commune with the choir that can not die.

Romance may make a person make shipwreck in his voyage, but it never



makes him anchor, more especially in stagnant water ; whereas sensitiveness, and feeling merely intense, do.

LXXXII.

It is curious, when two minds come together, to find how large a department of that which is the very sphere of the activity and life of one is a region unentered by, and absolutely forbidden to, the other. I can not conceive how or why ——'s life is so lonely, for he enters into and likes all subjects which other men like, understands business and the world, and is perfectly secure from those dreadful rushings of the spirit into unfathomable questions in which I have found no bottom, and shuddered to find none. He is safe, too, from that worst trial which comes from a disposition that has in it—I use the word in a good sense—romance ; for how can such a mind be tortured, or how such a heart disappointed ? I perceive,

To each his sufferings: all are men.

\* \* \* \* \*

That predominance of the meditative over the contriving faculties inevitably exposes one to dislike, as it did Hamlet, for now and then a certain tinge of seeming scorn is sure to mingle with its reveries on men and women. It is not, however, any feeling of superiority, but rather pity—not, I believe, insulting, though bitter. “ Quintessence of dust,” applied to humanity, is a mixture of regard and regret for frailness. It is dust, but quintessence of it. So, too, “ Frailty, thy name is woman ”—who does not feel that there is at least as much tenderness and mourning in that as bitterness ? Is it not disappointed worship that still hangs fondly lingering before the desecrated shrine ? However, as it is somewhat subtle to extract this, it is unwise to utter these amalgams of feeling aloud, for very few will pause to analyze and perceive that two metals, one at least a precious one, are fused together.

“ Blessed are they that mourn.”

—asked what that means. It is not a revelation of the uses of adversity ?—and does not the whole teaching of the Cross, in accordance with this, say that sorrow and pain alone wake us up to reality, and that trial is a truer refiner of character than pleasure ? Of course, this is not our first impression ; it needs a revelation to tell it, or at all events to interpret our own experience. You have a proof of that in a child's wonder at the expression, for how should a happy careless child divine such a mystery ?

I will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind. \* \* \*  
In the soothing thoughts which spring  
Out of human suffering.

I can not tell her the meaning of those words of Christ. Life alone can apply the meaning, or explain how true they are ; for, indeed, they are only subjectively true, deriving their truth, not from sorrow and pain in themselves, but from the tempers on which they fall ; so that they are not true always—to some never true. Yet how deep they are ! and how such convictions alone can make this life intelligible or tolerable !

That is a blessed faith which feels that there can not be clouds and gloom forever—which, ever resting in conviction of what God is, hopes and knows that “ joy cometh in the morning.” That cheerful undespairing temper marks Shakspeare's thought throughout ; in conjunction with that text, “ Blessed are they that mourn,” let it mark yours.

LXXXIII.

I am persuaded there is more in reserved people than we give them credit for ; they often conceal a deep and real feeling under an imperturbable exterior. \* \* \*

“The course of true love never did run smooth;” but then that means, I fancy, that it never shows itself to be true—never exhibits its strength—until rough obstacles destroy its smoothness. Many an attachment would have shown all the impetuosity of a dammed-up stream had it been checked, which, under existing circumstances, seems to flow monotonously and uninterestingly enough. The St. Lawrence is tame some miles above Niagara. No doubt the romance of the affair you mention has suffered, but I doubt whether the journey of life will be a bit less happy for that. There is a great difference between travelling one hundred miles in England and the same distance in South Africa, where Cumming spanned and inspanned with considerable difficulty every night and morning; and the romance of the pathless travel was immeasurably the greater, yet the douce gentlemen who travel to London and back every day do not less truly attain the end and object of travelling. Moreover, marriages which had romance in their preparatory circumstances, do they really turn out better than others? I recollect being pained with this feeling when quite a young child, on reading the sequel to the romantic adventures and final union of Prince Camaralzaman and Princess Badoura, in the “Arabian Nights.” They were all-in-all to each other—their constancy tried for years; and in after-life all went wrong. It struck me, little as I then knew of life, as true to life, and so did some of Crabbe’s painful but nature-like tales. It is well to feel how much of happiness is gained, or how much of wretchedness is spared, by the absence of those violent feelings which exhaust life, and leave the character dishevelled, the features worn with a graver as deep as that which sharp anguish cuts into the cheeks—

Scathed by fiery passion’s brunt.

How many such countenances we see with the marks of strong undisciplined feeling in them! I saw a lady of fifty to-day with cheeks as calm as if she were twenty; yet not apathetic, but wise, full of self-control, affectionate, and benign in manner. You felt that there was in store for her—

An old age, serene and bright,  
And calm as is a Lapland night.

I felt that self-rule and delivery from intense emotion and violent *accès* are the necessary qualifications for growth of character and the power of completing any thing on this earth. Every thing must pay its price, and romance in the feelings or circumstances of courtship often pays a very, very heavy one.

#### LXXXIV.

They all came in from Lindfield yesterday. I went out to fetch them, and spent some hours in the village of Lindfield itself, where I strongly felt the beauty and power of English country scenery and life to calm, if not to purify, the hearts of those whose lives are habitually subjected to such influences. Not that human nature is better there, but life is more natural, and real nature I hold to be the great law of our life, both physical and religious. Physical does, in fact, by derivation, mean natural—physics being the study of nature. I am sure that religion is the recall to real instead of perverted nature, just as the medicinal art is the recall of the body to natural health. There are false systems in both, as well as true, being marked in each case by the artificial and unnatural mode of dealing with the diseased part. You would give Allopathy as an instance of this, and I should give what St. Paul calls “bodily exercise”—literally, asceticism. Whereas Christ invariably appeals to unsophisticated nature, says “Sin no more,” just as if we should say, “You have eaten too much and drunk too much, poor man; well, eat less and drink less;” there is no magic besides that which will cure you, no doses of humbug, copious or infinitesimal.

I have begun to read Wordsworth's "Retrospect"\* again, and have persevered, in spite of the dullness, which at first deterred me; I rejoice extremely that I did. I find it deeply interesting, now that I have got a clue to his object, which is to show how influences are provided for us, if we will once surrender ourselves to them, partly passively, partly actively, instead of inventing artificial discipline; and that those influences, being God's, are the best—slow, sure, and purifying. It is a history of his own life, and, being a reflection of it, is apparently monotonous, having no shocks or striking incidents; but his intention is to show how, just from this very monotony, a character of purity and strength was built up. Some passages are excessively beautiful, the diction always pure and clear, like an atmosphere of crystal pellucidity, through which you see all objects without being diverted aside to consider the medium through which they are seen. When you do pause to think of this, you remark, "What a clear atmosphere! what pure water! or, what transparent crystal!" but at first you remark only the object. This, too, I observed of Stanley's "Life of Arnold." Every one spoke of Arnold, no one stopped to observe how well Stanley had done it; Stanley had merged himself and become transparent. Lord Lansdowne was the first whom I ever heard remark upon the biographer, though I had been on the watch long to see if any one would.

For myself, never have I felt a more fixed and settled depression. The thought of fixture here, except under the alternative of great pecuniary sacrifice, has been overwhelming at some moments, and at others, a dead, heavy weight: to be forever, *en evidence*, especially for one so unfitted as I am for it by tastes and predilections; yet, now that the die is cast, I will not shrink nor cast a look behind, but endeavor to be equal to the hour, and do my duty.

The day is gloomy, oppressive in the house—what it is outside I do not know. Thought has flowed sluggishly, like a thin green stream in a dead level, without health and without clearness; zest and interest are wanting, but I put down a part of this to the weather, though it is only a continuation of what has been unaltered indifference to almost all things. I am struggling against it as yet with poor success, but I hold it a duty—a real and paramount duty—and I will not tamely yield. I know how powerless a motive "our own sake" is to make us work with interest. It is like taking a constitutional with the painful consciousness in every movement that it is for the sake of health, instead of health coming while we are seeking, not health, but an object. Such I find the use of shooting, riding, etc., and such must be the way of getting good from interest in others. You can not wake up in them an interest by feeling it will do good to yourself; the interest must have no reflex motive, or else it will do no good. Hence, the uselessness of preaching to do right, to be charitable, etc., etc., because it will make you happy now and hereafter. No doubt it will, but you can not be charitable because it will. Hence, too, the folly of the system which resolves all our actions into a refined selfishness. So far as you try to be good, in order to be personally happy, you miss happiness—a great and beautiful law of our being. Heavenly happiness is the result of our own energy, and can not be poured upon the soul, and is almost entirely independent of circumstances made by us, not for us.

I am ashamed of the hasty way in which I dismissed Wordsworth's "Prelude." It is a noble work, one that has made my eyes fill again and again, not by its pathos, but by its lofty tone and translucent purity: a severe work, worthy of patriarchal times, when men went out into the fields to meditate at eventide, and disciplined their spirits by the pure influences of rock, hill, stream, forest, twilight, and darkness, and that, too, as in Isaac's case, on the eve of marriage.

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\* "The Prelude."

Do not fear with regard to —; all will be well. Affectionateness, maidenly self-possession, and a quiet spirit are more likely to bud into a beautiful character hereafter, than that impetuosity of sentiment which too often makes life the prey of wild and self-destructive passions. Principle is a higher thing than feeling, and will stand life's terrible test far better.

## LXXXV.

November 12.

I confess the awful mystery of life, and the perplexity which hangs around the question—what it is, and what it all means. Nevertheless, I am persuaded—as persuaded as of any thing I can be in this world—that the meaning is good and not evil—good, I trust, to the individual as well as to the whole. There is a wondrous alchemy in time and the power of God to transmute our faults, errors, sorrows—nay, our sins themselves—into golden blessings; a truth which always appears to me prominent in the history of the Fall. The curses on man and woman, toil, etc., are all, in the process of time, changed into benedictions; the woman's lot itself, of subjugation and pain, becoming the very channel of her best powers of character, the condition of her devotion and her meekness. It is only the tempting devil-snake, in whose curse there is no element of alteration: only apparently a degradation, a slighter doom, no pain—better for him had it been so, for anguish might have slowly worked out change—but to crawl, and creep, and eat the dust of lower being forever. A truth for which my whole spirit blesses and adores the Ever Just. “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” — asked the meaning of this; surely it is plain. The tears which destroy the beauty of the outward man, channel his cheeks, cut his features with the sharp graver of anguish, are doing a glorious work on the spirit within, which is becoming fresh with all young and living feelings.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have just returned from the committee relating to the “Protestant and Anti-Popery,” etc., etc., meeting on Thursday, into which I was hooked. They asked me to speak on that day. I refused; on which the vicar begged for a show of hands, and they were raised, and the thing carried by clerical acclamation. Only conceive that! Of course I have still my option.

## LXXXVI.

To-day I had a long and strange interview with a lady who has recently become a member of the congregation. \* \* \* She asked me if I had ever known a case of trial so severe as hers. “Yes,” I replied; “numbers: it is the case of all. Suffering is very common, so is disappointment.” “Are our affections to be all withered?”—“Very often, I believe.” “Then why were they given me?” “I am sure I can not tell you that, but I suppose it would not have been very good for you to have had it all your own way.” “Then, do you think I am better for this blighting succession of griefs?”—“I do not know, but I know you ought to be.” Wordsworth was lying open on the table, and I pointed to her these lines:

Then was the truth received into my heart,  
That under heaviest sorrow earth can bring,  
If from the affliction somewhere do not grow  
Honor, which could not else have been a faith,  
An elevation and a sanctity;  
If new strength be not given nor old restored,  
The blame is ours, not nature's.

The deep undertone of this world is sadness: a solemn bass occurring at measured intervals, and heard through all other tones. Ultimately, all the strains of this world's music resolve themselves into that tone; and I believe

that, rightly felt, the Cross, and the Cross alone, interprets the mournful mystery of life—the sorrow of the Highest, the Lord of life; the result of error and sin, but ultimately remedial, purifying and exalting.

## LXXXVII.

I read, or rather studied, "Macbeth" through last night, sitting up very late, and never felt half its beauty—beauty as distinct from power—before.

Macready is now giving his farewell appearances, and "Macbeth" is for to-night. I was strangely tempted to go. Macready nobly tried to purge the stage from all its evils, and Shakspeare is free from the strong objections I have to any acting which merely exhibits dangerous feeling in its might. A friend had taken places and I had resolved not—nevertheless, I felt the temptation strong last night. The murder-scene became so vivid that I actually felt a sensation of creeping awe as I went up the stairs of the silent house, and in very shame was obliged to walk down again through the dark passages, to convince myself that I was not a child haunted with unreal terrors. I felt the tears actually start in reading that noble scene in which Macduff's fidelity to honor and goodness is tested by Malcolm. Macduff's burst of disappointment, on discovering that the prince, to whom all his heart's homage had been given, is, as he supposes, unworthy of it, touched me until my heart seemed too large. Those fine lines (Act IV. Scene 3)—

Fit to govern! No, not to live;

and then, when Macduff has the man he hates with noble hatred at last "within sword's reach," I could have almost shouted. I felt as if to have a firm grip of a sword in a villain's heart were the intensest rapture this earth has to give—the only thing which such as Macduff had worth living for. Places were taken for two nights—"Othello" and "Macbeth"—but I could not trust myself to either.

I have been trying lately to regulate my outward life somewhat more satisfactorily than usual—my papers, my study, my hours, in order that the inward life may have a faint chance of growing into form. The outward is at least within our power—whether the inward is I do not know; but the one acts upon the other, and it is a duty, at least, to do all that can be done. That all but omniscient Shakspeare says, in reply to Macbeth's

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart? \* \* \* \* \*  
Therein the patient  
Must minister to himself.

Then Macbeth says:

Come, put mine armor on, give me my staff, etc.,

wisely resolving upon present acting.

## CHAPTER IX.

BRIGHTON, 1851.

Interest of Mr. Robertson in Social Questions.—Sermon Preached in Mr. Drew's Church to Working-men.—He is accused with Mr. Maurice and Professor Kingsley of Socialistic Opinions.—His Answer.—The "Record" Newspaper reasserts the Charge after his Death.—Letters of Mr. Maurice on the Subject.—Letters of Mr. Robertson on Professor Kingsley's Sermon.—Letter from Mr. Drew containing Extracts from Mr. Robertson's Letters on the same Subject.—Declining Health.—Lectures on the Epistles to the Corinthians.—Lecture to Working-men at Hurstpierpoint.—Close of the Year 1851.

Letters from March 14, 1851, to December 5, 1851.

DURING the first six months of this year, 1851, no external occurrences of any importance broke the monotony of the life of Mr. Robertson. There are, however, a number of letters which exhibit some of the phases of thought and feeling through which he passed from January to June.

His interest in social questions continued to increase. His correspondence proves that he studied and endeavored to refute the views of Louis Blanc. In March he spoke at a meeting held to provide lodging-houses for the poor. On Whit-Sunday he preached a sermon on the social and religious aspects of the Great Exhibition.

In June, he was asked by Mr. Drew, of St. John's Church, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, to preach one of a series of sermons addressed to working-men. He consented, and chose as his subject the story of Nabal and David. The sermon, which is published under the title of "The Message of the Church to Men of Wealth," is an embodiment of his views on the subject of the rights of property and the rights of labor.\* It brought him into an undesired notoriety. The public protest of Mr. Drew, after Mr. Kingsley's sermon, in which the former repudiated before his congregation the teaching of the latter, naturally attracted the notice of the press; and Mr. Robertson was involved with Mr. Maurice, Mr. Kingsley, and Mr. Drew in a general accusation of socialistic opinions. The cause of the accusation is an amusing instance of the danger of propinquity. It happened at that time that Mr. Maurice and Mr. Kingsley were prominent persons in a movement called Christian Socialism, and the office where their business was transacted chanced to be opposite to St. John's Church. The series of sermons in the church, and the work in the office, were at once connected by some

\* He continued the subject afterwards at Brighton. Sermon XVIII. (First Series).

wiseacres of the press, and the report arose that both Mr. Robertson and Mr. Drew were involved in a movement "with which," to use Mr. Drew's words, "they were never at any time, directly or indirectly, connected." Mr. Robertson was attacked by one of the papers, and accused of preaching democratic principles. He answered that the expression, "democratic principles," was too vague to deal with; that the only passage in his sermon which bore upon the subject of democracy was a distinction drawn between the reverence to authority which is declared in Scripture to be a duty, and the slavish reverence to wealth and rank which is confounded with that duty, and in Scripture nowhere declared to be a duty: that if by democratic principles was meant Socialism—Socialism was not only not advocated, but distinctly opposed in his sermon.

Very soon after his death, the "Record" newspaper reasserted the charge of socialistic opinions; and a correspondence, of which the following letters from Mr. Maurice form a part, was published in the columns of that paper. These letters appeared on January 12, 1854:

## No. 1.

June 26, 1851.

MY DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,—I fear very much that I have allowed myself to forget the painful position into which I have been the means of bringing you. It has disturbed me much, since I saw you last night, to reflect that we may have weakened your influence, and added to some people's hard thoughts of you, by bringing you into connection with us and our unpopularity. I felt much ashamed of the vanity and injustice of any proposition about printing our sermons together, which only occurred to me at the moment, and which I perceived afterwards would be doing injustice to you. I can only ask you to forgive me for having tempted you to engage in the work, which I certainly never supposed would end as it has done. I think, if you do not object, that I will write a quiet letter to the "Daily News," fully admitting their right to say any thing they please of Christian Socialists; but begging them, in common justice, not to confound you with us, as you never called yourself by any such name, and as your sermon was neither Socialist nor High-Church in any ordinary view of either epithet, but what they themselves would confess to be a liberal and manly utterance. If you can suggest any better way in which I can act, or if you wish me to abstain from that way, I will do as you like; at all events, will you let me express how much the great pleasure of having seen you and made your acquaintance is mixed with pain at the thought of having made you feel more than ever the divisions and confusion of the Church?

Yours very truly,

F. D. MAURICE.

## No. 2.

To CAPTAIN ROBERTSON.

January 3, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR,—I very much regret that my absence from London has delayed my answer to your note of the 31st December. It must have made me appear neglectful of your wishes. I trust that you will believe that my re-

erence and affection for the memory of your son would render any suspicion of indifference to his character, or to his relatives, especially painful to me.

The inference which you draw from your son's own statement, and which was confirmed by my letter, is altogether correct. He never, even for a moment, identified himself with the Christian Socialists, or entered into any of their plans. I never had the pleasure of seeing him till the spring of 1851, when I called upon him at Brighton, at the request of Mr. Drew, who was in no way connected with our proceedings. It happened that Mr. Kingsley and I were asked to preach sermons in the same course with him, and that Mr. Kingsley very reluctantly accepted the invitation. But other persons were also asked, who would entirely have disclaimed his views and mine; and the character of the church in which we were successively to appear showed that our only bond was a common feeling that the Church was to labor for all classes, but particularly for the working-classes. When I found that the circumstances connected with Mr. Kingsley's sermon had led the newspapers to confound the different preachers in Mr. Drew's church together, I proposed, as you have seen, entirely to exculpate Mr. Robertson—the only person, besides Mr. Kingsley and me, who had yet delivered a lecture—from the charge. He very generously declined my offer in a note (the only one, I believe, I ever received from him, certainly the only one which was not of a merely formal character), which I was looking at the other day, and which I shall hope to send you when I return to London. But I am certain he declined only from his characteristic chivalry and unwillingness to shrink from us while we were in disgrace, not because he in the least adopted our name or was disposed to take part in our plans. From the time of our meeting in London, in the summer of 1851, to the time of his death, I never saw him or had any intercourse with him by letters. I sent him one of my books, and preached once in his church (when he was absent, and without his knowledge); but I never had the slightest reason to imagine that he sympathized in any opinion of mine, theological, moral, or economical. I always felt that he was doing a great and noble work, amidst much misrepresentation and obloquy, and I was anxious not to give him more to bear than fell naturally and necessarily to his lot. The exceeding delight which it would have given me to learn from him, and to have received his hints and corrections of my views, would have been purchased too dearly if I had led his enemies or his friends to suppose that he was responsible for any words or acts which they might be disposed to condemn in me.

There are two obvious verbal inaccuracies in the copy of my note which you have sent me, but I will not say they are owing to you or me. If you should find that the original does not warrant my alterations, pray publish it according to your reading. But make any use of that letter, as well as of this, which you may think desirable. Believe me, my dear sir, faithfully yours,

F. D. MAURICE.

P.S.—If you wish it, I will write to the "Record" or any other paper; but the chance of my letter being inserted is, I should think, small (at least in the "Record").\*

The two following letters agree with the expressions in the letter of Mr. Maurice, and prove that Mr. Robertson, while wishing Mr. Maurice and Mr. Kingsley God-speed in their work, and refusing to shrink from their side, neither adopted the views they then held, nor gave his personal sanction to the means they employed:

\* The "Record" has denied that these letters appeared in its columns, but they are nevertheless.



July, 1851.

MY LORD,—I feel sure that I shall be excused for taking up a few minutes of your lordship's time in making an observation on the remarks which you have kindly sent me on Kingsley's sermon, which I do, because I think him a man worth putting in a true point of view, though I scarcely know him.

I quite admit the politico-economical errors in the sermon. It is false to attribute solely to the selfishness of the moneyed classes that which arises partly out of the tendency, and encouragement of the tendency, to multiply like rabbits in a warren, and the degrading admission by philanthropists of the impossibility of checking that instinct. It seems to me a great mistake to lead the working-classes to suppose that by any means independent of their own energy, moral improvement, and self-restraint, their condition can be permanently altered. And what he says of the accumulation of capital is vague and declamatory. All this I have said to him. Nor does it seem to me (I speak ignorantly) that co-operation can long replace competition without becoming competition itself, between bodies instead of individuals; or that the good of it can be other than that education which it may give to the working-classes, *in transitu*, in the points of foresight, self-control, and providence. But disagreeing with the views which Kingsley *does* hold, I still think it only fair to say that I believe that sermon misrepresents them. In an address published, or soon to be published, I am told he has very strongly stated the opposite and corrective truths, even offending the men by the energy with which he has vindicated the necessity of unequal and even large accumulations of capital.

All I am anxious for is that sympathy should be felt, or rather candor extended, towards the exaggerations of generous and unselfish men like Kingsley, whose warmth, even when wrong, is a higher thing than the correctness of cold hearts. It is so rare to find a clergyman who can forget the drill and pipeclay of the profession, and speak with a living heart for the suffering classes, not as a policeman established to lecture them into proprieties, but as one of the same flesh and blood vindicating a common humanity. And therefore Mr. Drew's protest, and the Bishop of London's cold condemnation, and almost equally cold retraction, appear to me so sad, as representations of Church-of-Englandism. Besides, is it not in the nature of things almost to be wished, and certainly inevitable, that exaggerated statements on the one side should be balanced by even over-warm declarations of the opposite truth? We have been drilling the poor into loyalty and submission for three hundred years. Is it not to be expected that at last, men looking with their own eyes into the "glorious law of liberty" should express in rather indignant terms what is a surprising discovery to them—"You have left one great half of the Gospel untaught—its bearing, namely, upon man's civil freedom, and its constant siding with the degraded." And the accumulation of capital, an abstract right, requires to be checked by a deeper right. *Summum jus summa injuria*. Christianity must come in to balance and modify political economy.

I do not know whether I am justified in sending this long dissertation to your lordship, especially knowing from your public career how entirely you sympathize with all that is generous and, in the true sense of the word, free. I suppose I was incited to it by delight at finding that your lordship had so fairly and candidly judged Kingsley's discourse, and by a desire to modify the impression on some points which his own words have produced.

November 25, 1851.

MY DEAR MR. HUTTON,—I must, in the midst of many small engagements, find one minute to reply to your letter.

In the co-operative plan I have a very limited hope. Eternal laws seem to me against them, and were they to succeed, it appears to me that it would

only be competition in another form—of association against association, instead of that of individual against individual. And if this were to be prevented by legislative enactment, I think evils far worse than those of competition would result. The fatal objection to the Louis Blanc scheme is, in my mind, that it makes no provision for an original instinct in our own nature, that of individuality and property. Moreover, that the principle of rivalry is to be our only law, and left to work with pedantic cold-blooded adherence to maxim—let who will be crushed—I can never believe to be the intention of God. All goes on here by the antagonism of opposites, and I doubt not we shall find how to reconcile at last the two equally true and Christian positions—

1. Shall I not do what I will with mine own?

2. No man said that aught which he had was his own.

If we were all Christians in fact as well as by right, the difficulty would be at an end; but I do not think that the attempts which begin with the society instead of the individual, will any of them solve the question. The latter, the Christian way, some day or other will. Meanwhile I rejoice at all efforts from the world side; even failures teach us something—

And for some true result of good  
All parties work together.

Consequently, I wish God-speed to Mr. Maurice and his plans. I had a long conversation lately with Lord Carlisle about it, and he seemed much of the same opinion.

I sympathize deeply with Mr. Maurice. I do not agree with him entirely, either theologically or economically. But he is quite after my own heart in this, that he loves to find out the ground of truth on which an error rests, and to interpret what it blindly means, instead of damning it. He loves to see the soul of good, as Shakspeare says, in things evil. I desire to see the same; therefore I love him, and so far I am at one with him. I do not pledge myself to one of his opinions, and disagree with many. But he is every inch a man, and a right noble one.

Mr. Drew, who was brought by all these circumstances into close contact with Mr. Robertson, has kindly communicated to me his impressions in the following letter:

MY DEAR SIR,—I will comply with your request that I would contribute a few pages to your forthcoming “Life” of my much-beloved and honored friend from some of my correspondence with him, and from my recollections of our intercourse.

That many have been sorely impatient on account of the delay of the long-promised “Life” is not at all surprising, and yet I am sure you have acted wisely in postponing it; for indeed Robertson is only now becoming adequately known, even to those who were most intimate with him: any image of his strong and lofty spirit which might have been presented before this time must have entirely failed in expressing the greatness by which we now know he was distinguished, even amongst the greatest of our generation. If the most inconsiderable men can not be understood until they have been freed from their earthly environment of trouble and strife and toil, and death hath cast its softening, purifying light around our memories of them, how truly may be it said that this transfiguration was needful in his case! Apart from ordinary causes of misconception, we remember his patient silence, his dignified reserve. Then, moreover, the seclusion in which much of his work—the mere amount of which has so much astonished us—must have been done, could only allow him to be seen, by even his nearest friends, in fragmentary disclosures. They had, con-

sequently, but the most inadequate conception of his power and depth and self-devotedness: only now is he rising before them in the nobleness of a character which far transcends even the highest estimate they could have formed of him. And when I remember how marvellously—if I may not use a stronger word—much of the material for our present knowledge of him has been preserved, I feel it is indeed the duty of all who can add any contribution to it, to furnish this at once, even though it be at the painful cost of acknowledging that they were separated from him by strong differences of feeling and opinion. You are aware that this was my own case, though I most thankfully remember that these differences never interfered with the cordiality—I may say the affectionateness—of the intercourse between us. Gladly would I forget the circumstances to which I am referring, but in any thing like a complete account of him they must be brought forward: nor will I withhold any *characteristic* sentence of his concerning them, though some of those sentences were uttered as strong, sometimes indignant, condemnation of proceedings which I believed I had rightly as well as conscientiously adopted.

It was in connection with the circumstances I am alluding to, and which are detailed with sufficient fullness in another page of this volume, that a large portion of our correspondence was carried forward. He afterwards continued it, though it was at length abruptly terminated, in consequence, I fear, of somewhat vehement expressions on my part of dissent from his views on an entirely distinct subject. The closely-written pages in his firm, clear, handwriting which now lie before me seem to bring out, even more strikingly than any thing of his I have elsewhere seen, some marked features in his character, which are so admirably described in one of those noble pages which picture the ideal minister of "The Kingdom of Christ," that I might almost think my friend was in the view of its gifted writer: Spiritual forms, which the majority have need to see reflected in sensible mirrors, rose up before him in their naked substance and majesty; good and evil were to him present, not as means to some result, but as themselves the great ends and results to which all is tending. \* \* \* He had a certain habit of measuring acts and events, not by their outward magnitude, but according to their spiritual proportions and effects. \* \* \* So he revered poverty and helplessness; he understood that that truth is not the highest which is the most exclusive, but which is the most universal; and the immediate vision of God, and entire subjection of heart and spirit to His loving will, seemed to him the great gifts intended for man, after which every one, for himself and his fellows, may aspire. Robertson embodied this description; and he did so, I believe, in virtue of that purity and humbleness of spirit to which this vision of God and of His truth, and this entire submission to it, have been promised. His judgment was thus deep, just, and comprehensive, because he, too, had learned to seek his Heavenly Father's will, and not his own. His willingness to do that will gave him his profound insight into his Lord's teaching, and the strong conviction, which has passed into so many other spirits from his own, that it is of God.

Here, in his singular purity and truthfulness, and in his constant devoutness, we have the secret of what we need not scruple to designate his prophetic insight into truth, and habitual consciousness of its invisible and deep harmonies, and, along with this, his prophetic sympathy also with the weak and perplexed and overborne. Beneath all conventional and, indeed, all outward expressions of the mind of God, and through all the means and institutions through which His grace is working for our recovery, he ever looked to the realities and purposes to which they were subservient, and strove with all his concentrated energy, always doing with all his might the task of the present hour, to set forth what he then looked on in closest adaptation to the exigencies of his place and time. This often led him, after the manner of the ancient prophets, to speak as if he were disparaging other truths and ordinances,

which, in fact, no one revered more deeply than himself. Nor was he unconscious of his liability to be misunderstood in consequence, and of the odium it might bring on him. Yet he deliberately maintained his purpose, and earnestly claimed for others the same "liberty of prophesying" which, on this ground, he used himself. Thus he says :

"We knew Kingsley's heart, his zeal and earnestness; and if any of his sentences were liable to misconstruction, we ought patiently to have waited till time and our own explanations could have supplied what was wanting.

\* \* \* The Son of God said many things *very* liable to be misunderstood; and sober people thought them very dangerous; protested against them, 'lest the Romans should come and take away their place and nation.' I admit the rashness of Kingsley's verbiage; but rashness is a thing to be loved, not rebuked. My brother, or another officer of his name, by the last 'Gazette,' was rather too forward in the action with the Kaffirs, and fought them with a few men nearly alone. The commanding officer said it was rash, for he lost several men, but praised his gallantry warmly. I wish to God we had a little soldier's spirit in our Church! \* \* \*

"No! the Church of England will endure no chivalry, no *dash*, no effervescing enthusiasm. She can not turn it to account, as Rome turns that of Loyolas and Xaviers. We bear nothing but sober prosaic routine; and the moment any one with heart and nerve fit to be the leader of a forlorn hope appears, we call him a dangerous man, and exasperate him by cold unsympathizing reproofs, till he becomes a Dissenter and a demagogue. \* \* \* Well, I suppose God will punish us, if in no other way, by banishing from us all noble spirits, like Newman and Manning, in one direction, and men like Kingsley in another, leaving us to flounder in the mud of commonplace, unable to rise or sink above the dead level. Day by day my hopes are sinking. We dare not say the things we feel. Who can? Who possibly may, when 'Records,' 'Guardians,' brother ministers, and lay hearers are ready at every turn to call out heterodoxy? It is bondage more than Roman. And if a man sets his face like a flint, and desperately runs amuck with his eyes shut, caring not who is offended, then he injures his own spirit, becomes, like noble Carlyle, ferocious, and loses the stream of living waters in dry desert sand, fructifying nothing, but only festering into swamp shallows. \* \* \* Imprudence, half-truths, rash cries of sympathetic torture. Yes! But through all these I would hold fast by a man if I were sure he was sound at heart, and meant differently from what he seemed to mean. \* \* \* I hold to heart, to manhood and nobleness, not correct expression. I try to judge words and actions by the man, not the man by his words and actions. \* \* \* What I have said in behalf of Kingsley I have said quite as strongly from my own pulpit in behalf of Tractarians. By standing by a man I mean not adopting his views, if they are not our own, but tolerating them, and that to an almost unlimited extent—unlimited, at least, in comparison with the limits which the most liberal I know propose. And if I were convinced he meant rightly, then by standing by him I should include defending and explaining. \* \* \* I am afraid my illustrations are somewhat too military, but I was rocked and cradled to the roar of artillery, and I began life with a preparation for, and appointment to, the 3d Dragoons. *Dis aliter visum.*"

You may here see how deliberately he used much of that language which, in some instances, might be condemned as marking vehement one-sidedness on his part; how perfectly he was conscious of those complementary balancing truths which were apparently forgotten by him when he urgently insisted on others which he looked on as neglected. This is also further seen when he writes :

"Kingsley assumes, perhaps, more than I should, that human selfishness lies at the bottom of our social evils. I believe that the contravention of laws

which will avenge themselves—as, for instance, improvidence and foolish marriages—have had their share in the production of our present embarrassment; and that it is one thing to cry woe to those who have kept back the hire of the laborers who have reaped down their fields, and another to denounce it against those whose fault has been partly ignorance, partly supineness. But then (he adds) ‘this is my opinion, mine only,’ he having a right to his. Moreover, he may be more right than I think. Our foolish sentiment in promoting marriages, and declaring submission to a brute instinct a Christian duty; our non-education of the people through party squabbles; our suffering a vast population to grow up while Church extension meant only more churches and more salaries; and while bishops in Parliament defending the Church meant only bishops rising whenever the stipends of the Church were in danger, and sitting still when corn laws, or any other great measure affecting the numbers and food of the people, came into question. All these things, when I think of them, make me doubt whether Kingsley’s theory has not a deep, deep, awful truth at bottom. Besides, for three thousand years it was the theory and tone of God’s best and truest, of His prophets, His brave ones; and I shrink from saying, very authoritatively, that his view is wrong, though at present I do think it imperfect.

“It is quite true that Kingsley took no notice of the blessings of constituted order, etc. But they were no very particular blessings to the wretches who were rising by thousands before his tortured imagination. Blessings to you and to me, and to nobles, and well-to-do tradesmen, and to all Belgravia; but Kingsley felt he had something else to do besides lauding our incomparable constitution—viz., to declare the truth that there is an emancipation yet unaccomplished, which will be woe to Belgravia, and to hock-drinking tradesmen, and to us, the ministers of the Church, if we do not accomplish.”

If, for many reasons besides the sorrow of even seeming to have needed such words of expostulation and rebuke, one might be painfully reluctant to copy out these passages, yet surely no one, revering my friend’s character, and desiring to have it fully represented, would have one of them suppressed. I think he would not, for the very reason which might at first seem to require this suppression. For not only are they plainly distinguished from that railing fanaticism of the mere demagogue with which, on a superficial glance, they might be confounded; but they are, in fact, essentially, nay, antithetically opposed to it. This is seen in the consciousness that may be discerned in even the most vehement of my friend’s utterances, of all the force belonging to every view of the question in debate that was urged by his correspondent. He could also sympathize with the motives and feelings of those who were sincerely resisting him. “Nevertheless,” he says, in the same letter from which the above extracts are taken:

“I repeat, I do you warmly justice. If I did not, I assure you I should not have taken the trouble to write as warmly and strongly as I have done; I should have let my sad and indignant feelings remain pent-up. I have poured them out to you, because I do think it is worth it, and that there is a much greater chance of union by so doing. I am sure of you, as of myself, that you are not on the side of the Pharisaisms and Respectabilities in the sense in which I spoke of them: Respectabilities, in a now familiar Carlylian sense, is a word implying, at least to me, persons like Balaam, or persons who are respectable, and nothing more; persons who are simply and selfishly conservative—not Conservatives, because I honor many of them, but persons who hate stir and reformation, because these get down to facts, and disturb cobwebs.”

One more extract may be given from his letters on this subject. It is the last which I received from him relating to it. Some of his words here are worth copying, for the sake of showing the intense hatred—and surely it was

the hatred of him who said, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?"—with which he regarded some of the malignant forms which sectarianism assumes among us :

"I have just had sent me the 'Record,' in which your letter appears, and thank you heartily for the generous defense of me which it contains. The 'Record' has done me the honor to abuse me for some time past, for which I thank them gratefully. God forbid they should ever praise me! One number alone contained four unscrupulous lies about me, on no better evidence than that some one had told them, who had been told by somebody else. They shall have no disclaimer from me. If the 'Record' can put a man down, the sooner he is put down the better. The only time I have ever said anything about Socialism in the pulpit has been to preach against it. The evangelicalism (so called) of the 'Record' is an emasculated cur, snarling at all that is better than itself, cowardly, lying, and slanderous. It is not worth while to stop your horse and castigate it; for it will be off yelping, and come back to snarl. An evangelical clergyman admitted some proofs I had given him of the 'Record's' cowardice and dishonesty, but said, 'Well, in spite of that I like it, because it upholds the truth, and is a great witness for religion.' 'So,' said I, 'is that the creed of evangelicism?' A man may be a liar, a coward, and slanderous, and still uphold the truth!"

Vehement! some may say; but surely in such vehemence there was heavenly wisdom! Are not these words of his in profound concord with the divinest that have been addressed to us? Did he not speak thus because, in closest personal communion, he had deeply inbreathed the spirit of Him who, of all, spake sometimes most severely, as well as most lovingly and tolerantly? Was not this intense feeling, that so flowed out from him on all sides, part of the "reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice," which could not—should we, in love for him, desire that it might—have been prolonged? When I think of the consuming pain this broadly intense sympathy must have cost him, I recall as selfish and inconsiderate the wish that he were still here to help us in the great conflict of our generation. Robertson would have helped us all, by his deep insight and large open-heartedness, on whichever side of the strife we are contending. Of his genius and his energy we are bereaved, but all may endeavor to maintain his sympathy and tolerance; and I shall be glad that I have overcome the reluctance to send you some of the words he addressed to me, if any shall be helped in that endeavor by reading them.

Sincerely yours,

G. S. DREW.

All through this year Mr. Robertson's health continued to decline. In June a strong memorial was presented to him from Drs. Allen and Whitehouse, "urging me," he wrote, "to give up my work for some months, and prognosticating unpleasant consequences if I refuse." In January he had already written to a friend excusing himself for remissness in sending the usual notes of his sermons.

The lassitude he suffered from prevented his enjoying the Exhibition; the crowd and noise irritated and wearied him. But his work did not suffer, nor his energy decrease. In June he began to lecture in the afternoons of Sundays on the Epistles to the Corinthians. He introduced the course by a masterly account of the state of Corinth and its parties at the time of the Apostle Paul. He continued these lectures till his death, and the last he ever preached was on the last

chapter of the second epistle. They have now been published; though from notes so meagre and unfinished that no idea of them, as delivered, can be formed. All the color and glow have perished; the thoughts alone remain. They are valuable, however, for their insight into St. Paul's character; for the way in which the principles applied by St. Paul to Corinthian parties and Corinthian society are brought to bear upon the parties and society of this age; and especially valuable for their *method* of exposition. They form almost a manual of the mode in which the Epistles should be treated in the pulpit. For this reason they were likely to be more acceptable to clergymen and teachers of the Bible than to the generality of readers. And so it has proved. From ministers of all sections of the Church and of Dissent, even from those who differ most widely from Mr. Robertson's opinions, testimonies to the value of these Lectures have been received.

As to these opinions themselves, an interesting letter, written to a Roman Catholic friend, will be found—No. CXI.—in which he states his position in the Church, and the principles on which he taught during the year 1851.

In October he crossed to Ireland for his usual rest, and returned to Brighton in November. It will be seen from his letters how strong an interest he took in the movements of Kossuth, and with what wise calmness, despite of all his enthusiasm for liberty and against oppression, he endeavored to penetrate to the root of the question of Hungary.

He crowned the year and his exertions in the cause of social reform by a lecture to working-men at Hurstpierpoint—notes of which have been published. The main ideas were borrowed from Channing's "Essay on the Elevation of the Working-classes;" but he clothed them with such new thought that he made them altogether his own. So closed for him the year 1851. It was a year during which his work, ever arduous and wearing, was rendered doubly so by misconception and attack, and by the pressure and pain of advancing disease. But he bore up nobly, and endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. From this time forth till his death his life and energy were those of a race-horse, the spirit of which needs no spur, but which dies at the winning-post exhausted by its victory.

*Letters from March 14 to December 5, 1851.*

LXXXVIII.

*To a Friend.*

March 14, 1851.

Thank you most gratefully for the "Stones of Venice." There are no writings which, at the present moment, offer such interest to me as Ruskin's. They give a truth to repose on which is real, whatever else is unreal; and as a relief from the *dim* religious light of theology, in which one seems to make out the outline of a truth and the next moment lose it in hopeless mystery and shadows, they are very precious—more precious than even works which treat of scientific truth, such as chemistry, for *they* do not feed the heart, and that is the thing that aches and craves in us just now to a degree that makes the resentment against such people as Miss Martineau on the one side, and the evangelicals on the other, almost *savage*. I have been and am reading the "Modern Painters" again, with renewed enjoyment and sense of soothing.

You do not "get a clearer conception of truths." You are "less able wholly to understand." Could it be otherwise? If, instead of a clearer conception, you are getting a grander idea, even though it should give a bewildering sense of indefiniteness and infinitude, is not this gain rather than loss? Who can "understand?" If a man understands spiritual truth, I should think he *knows*, because he feels little about it. If you are exchanging measurable maxims for immeasurable principles, surely you are rising from the mason to the architect. "Seven times?" No—no—no—seventy times seven. No maxim—a heart principle. I wonder whether St. Peter *wholly understood* that, or got a very clear *conception* from it. A sublime idea he did, no doubt, which would forever and forever outgrow the outline of any dogmatic definition; but just so far as St. Peter could define less what he believed on that point, he would know more. And yet I dare say there were respectable Pharisees in that day who would gravely shake their heads and say, that it was a dangerous thing to do away with old-established rules, and throw a man upon the feelings of a vague unlimited principle.

It seems to me that this feeling of vagueness is inevitable when we dare to launch out upon the sea of truth. I remember that half-painful, half-sublime sensation in the first voyage I took out of sight of land when I was a boy; when the old landmarks and horizon were gone, and I felt as if I had no home. It was a pain to find the world so large. By degrees the mind got familiarized to that feeling, and a joyful sense of freedom came. So I think it is with spiritual truth. It is a strangely desolate feeling to perceive that the "Truth" and the "Gospel" that we have known were but a small home-farm in the great universe; but at last I think we begin to see sun, moon, and stars as before, and to discover that we are not lost, but free, with a latitude and longitude as certain, and far grander than before.

LXXXIX.

I spent last evening with Mrs. Jameson and Lady Byron. The conversation turned at first chiefly on the gradual changes in the feeling towards the Virgin, which are marked by the forms of representation of her. It seems that the earliest appearance of the Virgin and Child dates in the fifth century; before that the Virgin was alone. The first representations of this change bore a striking resemblance to the heathen statues and *relievs* of Juno nursing the infant Mars. Then came pictures in which the Virgin is represented as crowned by her son—at first kneeling before Him, then sitting a little lower than He, then on a level with Him. For many ages she appears as



intercessor between Christ the Judge and the guilty earth; in this respect personifying the idea which, among many modern Christians, is personified by Christ as the Lord of compassion; while He represented that conception which they now assign to the Father, offended wrath, needing intercession, and scarcely appeased. This shows, however, I think, the radical truth of the idea. Love and justice are really one—different sides of each other; love to that which is like God is alienation from that which opposes Him. In this light, too, the heart realizes Him as an unity, when the intellect is subordinated, and does not dialectically divide, that is, in our highest moral state; but when the understanding begins to busy itself with these conceptions, they are necessarily conceived of as two, not one, and the beings in whom they inhere are necessarily conceived of as distinct.

I look upon that Middle Age statement and the more modern one only as forms, and perhaps necessary forms, of thought, which are false in the higher regions of belief in which the heart, loving, lives. She showed me some exquisite forms of the Virgin by the elder painters, when feeling was religious—Perugino, Fra Angelico, Raphael. Afterwards the form became coarse, as the religious feeling died off from art. I asked her how it is that the Romish feeling now is developing itself so much in the direction of Mariolatry; and she said that the purer and severer conceptions of the Virgin are coming back again, and visibly marking Romish art.

Briefly, I will tell you what I said in answer to her inquiries. I think Mariolatry was inevitable. The idea most strongly seized in Christianity of the sanctification of humanity attached itself to Christ as the man; but the idea naturally developed contained something more—the sanctification of womanhood. Until, therefore, the great truth that in Christ is neither male nor female—that His was the double nature, all that was most manly and all that was most womanly—could take hold of men, it was inevitable that Christianity should seem imperfect without an immaculate woman. Swedenborgianism has therefore, it seems, a similar dream, and so has even atheism. I am told that Comte, the French philosopher, has broached a somewhat corresponding *rêve* in his "Anticipations of the Future." We only want, he thinks, and shall have, the glory of women to worship. He is an atheist. Alas! if he be right, we shall have to search elsewhere than in the ball-going, polkaing frivolities in female form which offer themselves as the modern goddesses.

From this the conversation turned on capital punishment. I declared for it, wishing that it should be abolished for murder, and inflicted only on those who are guilty of wrongs to women. For murder is a trifle—life is not of so much value—and the tenderness for human life is not one of the noblest signs of our times, for it is not commensurable with a hatred of wrong; whereas in the other case society is worse than unchristian; that which is wrong in a woman is doubly so in a man, because she does with personal risk what he does with risk to another, in personal security and damnable selfishness.

#### XC.

I rejoice that you have taken up Ruskin; only let me ask you to read it very slowly, to resolve not to finish more than a few pages each day. One or two of the smaller chapters are quite enough—a long chapter is enough for two days, except where it is chiefly made up of illustration from pictures; those can only be read with minute attention when you have the print or picture to which he refers before you; and those which you can so see, in the National Gallery, Dulwich, etc., you should study, with the book, one or two at a time. The book is worth reading in this way: study it—think over each chapter and examine yourself mentally, with shut eyes, upon its principles, putting down briefly on paper the heads, and getting up each day the

principles that you gained the day before. This is not the way to read many books, but it is the way to read much; and one read in this way, carefully, would do you more good, and remain longer fructifying, than twenty skimmed. Do not read it, however, with slavish acquiescence; with deference, for it deserves it, but not more. And when you have got its principles woven into the memory, hereafter, by comparison and consideration, you will be able to correct and modify for yourself. Together with this, I would read carefully some other book of a totally different character; some narrative of human action and character—if stirring and noble, so much the better. I have just finished the first volume of Major Edwardes's "Punjab," a history of wonderful adventures, but too long. I could not recommend it to you, but some day I will give you a very brief epitome of it.

I am endeavoring to do my work more regularly, simply, and humbly—trying as it is, and against the grain, and deeply as I feel the need of some physical enterprise.

Tell —, with my kind regards, that Louis Blanc's theory requires something besides a warm heart and a quick perception to fairly judge. There are certain laws of society, as certain as the laws of matter, which can not be reached intuitively, or by feeling, but require study—very hard study; and the misfortune of his theory is, that appealing to those whose feelings are quick, and sense of the wrongs of things as they are—acute, it is very fascinating; but whether it is true or not, demands a far calmer study of the laws of the universe than his superficial theory generally gets. Feeling says, "Relieve the beggar, and you can not be wrong;" Fact says, "The relief of beggary can be proved the worst injury to the community." Socialism and Fourierism will draw in many generous spirits, but it must bring about, at last, evils tenfold greater than those it would relieve. I never read any thing more pitifully self-destructive than the digest of Louis Blanc's doctrine, in a catechism by himself. Succeed it can not, but it will probably be tried some day, perhaps on a large scale; and if so, the social disorganization which must ensue, and the agonies and convulsions in which society will reel to and fro, and the reaction from it, will be, perhaps, the most terrible lesson which the world has ever learned.

This is the invariable result of protection—the forcible compression and hindrance of the laws of nature until they burst. Louis Blanc thinks God has made very bad laws, and he would make better. So thought a wiser than Louis Blanc, or fifty Louis Blancs—Plato. He considered the partialities of maternal love very pernicious, and would have prevented a woman knowing her own child, making her the mother of all the children of the State. Of course maternal partialities are full of evil; but, on the whole, that being God's system, will work better than the universalism and state education of Plato, however sublime the conception may seem. The only difficulty is to create the feeling which is to be the motive, that is all. Mr. — the other day was very learnedly descanting before some ladies upon the modern invention of throwing red-hot shot and red-hot shells. Red-hot shot I had heard of at Gibraltar. But I humbly ventured to ask respecting the red-hot shells—how they got the powder in? That is the difficulty in Louis Blanc's system. Nevertheless, it will be tried; and, like the red-hot shell system, the result will be—an explosion.

#### XCL

#### *To one entering London Life.*

MY DEAR —,—Gavazzi's Exeter Hall orations and this electro-biology are of the exciting class of stimuli which I reckon dangerous and useless. The first leaves nothing behind, morally or intellectually; the second belongs

as yet to the witchcraft and mesmerism class, which may hereafter be reduced to calm rules and become scientific; but at present, except to scientific and classifying minds, I think useful for nothing but to kill the disease of *ennui* by exciting the Athenian desire of *loving* "some new thing."

Do let me earnestly entreat you to use force to overcome this craving after stimuli of this class; it is time and money lost. One-tenth part of the time and attention given regularly to the acquisition of some of the branches of information for which London affords so many opportunities would relieve you from *ennui*, and will leave something behind. Suppose you try the mental discipline of giving all the hours which you would fritter on such things to one pursuit—say an interesting attendance on some course of not abstruse lectures. I pray you to grasp my principles, not my rules; for to say *this, that, and that* are exciting, and leave nothing behind, is to give dead rules. Remember the spirit and philosophy of that which I say.

## XCII.

*To the Same.*

Last night I wrote so rapidly to save the post that possibly my meaning may have been obscure. What I intended to say was this: the life you are now about to enter will be one of an exciting character; diminish it as you will, yet balls, theatres, late hours, varied society, must necessarily make the atmosphere you breathe highly stimulating. What you want in your other life is a corrective and emollient.

It matters little that you avoid the theatre and music, if in their stead you substitute Gavazzi, with his theatrical *pose* and voice, and his exciting orations. I do not say that under no circumstances it would be desirable to hear him. Were you for months in a dull country town, I should say it might be well to vary its monotony by such an excitement, and its exaggeration might be even wholesome as the counteractive of an extreme; but under present circumstances, if you are really in earnest in your desire to discipline your spirit, and get the peace which can alone come from watchfulness, I should say it is one of those indulgences which must be pernicious, though one which, of course, the worn, jaded London ladies must find most delightful, varying their excitement with a fresh stimulus, and giving them horse-radish when they are tired of mustard, cayenne when wearied of horse-radish. This, I believe, Mr. —, too, has done for them, and probably this is what sermons generally accomplish. One spoonful of cayenne to six of mustard, and Soyer himself could not then give such piquancy to their week—would to God I were not a mere pepper-cruet to give a relish to the palates of the Brightonians.

Well, to proceed: I think natural facts most valuable for your mind to repose upon; but the class which you select are precisely those which, instead of giving the repose of philosophic certainty, leave the mind in a whirl of wonder and perplexity: the disputed facts which are not recognized as facts, which produce controversy and excitement—mesmerism, electro-biology, odology. Half the time—nay, one-tenth of the time—wasted upon the charlatans who invent these, or mystify the real facts contained in them, would put many in possession of truths quite as marvellous, infinitely more beautiful, because their connection with life and usefulness is known, and far more capable of disciplining the mind towards peace, and rest, and God. I can see no effect produced by the others except bewilderment, dogmatism, or skepticism. Let philosophers examine them, separate the error from the facts, and then we can look at them; but at present, entirely untrained in such studies, we are as little able to distinguish the laws of the universe from jugglery as a ploughman is to separate vaccination from the charm system; and the appeal to judgment in these matters seems to me always a great presumptive proof of something false.

Besides which, the popular mind, always craving belief, takes up implicitly these crude *phenomena* with a reverence which is so much abstracted from rightful objects; and then the vacillation and perpetual uncertainty in which the mind is left produces a glow of excitement which betrays what is in fact the real attractiveness in these pursuits—the power they have to give excitement with no mental trouble. Excitement is the natural reward of toil; but that is a healthy excitement. Felt by the philosopher, it is delicious, calm, and productive of valuable exertions; but felt without mental or physical effort, ending in itself, and existing only for the sake of itself, it is, by a just law, self-destructive; just as spirits may be safely taken during hard exercise, but at the peril of him who takes them in a sedentary life.

Oh that I could make every one feel this principle as I feel it—and as a principle! I give many rules, “but the letter killeth, the spirit of the law giveth life.” If men could but get a living insight into the principle, which is to me as clear as noonday, the application of it would be easy; and, as in religious matters, the irksome irritating restriction, “Touch not, taste not, handle not”—*this, that, and the other*—would be dispensed with.

## XCIII.

I have finished Edwardes’s “Punjaub,” and about to begin it again, though it is in two thick volumes. I turn to the history of military adventures and to science with a sense of refreshment and home which intensifies as life goes on. Edwardes was a very fine fellow. He went as political agent with a Sikh army to the valley of Bunnoo, which Runjeet Singh had subdued and made tributary, but the tribute of which had never been collected, except once in three or four years, with great bloodshed and war. In three months Edwardes subdued one of the four tribes which inhabit it by negotiation; forced the others to raze with their own hands four hundred forts which might have stood a year’s siege; knowing nothing of engineering, built a fortress for the Sikh army, and compelled the refractory Sikhs, who had never done any thing of the kind before, to build it; collected the tribute; shot a fanatic, who rushed into his tent, after having slain the sentry, to murder him; disbanded a mutinous regiment; tried hundreds of causes in a country where justice had never been heard of before.

To turn to a different question: “Why was John the most beloved?” I suppose we learn from the fact the rightness of personal preferences—certain minds being more akin to other human minds than certain others; but also that in the highest hearts this affinity will be determined by spiritual resemblances, not mere accidental agreeabilities, accomplishments, or politenesses or pleasant manners. Again, I imagine that the union was one which had nothing to do with mental superiority; that might have been more admirable: John was lovable. Not talent, as in St. Paul’s case, nor eloquence, nor amiability drew Christ’s spirit to him, but that large heart, which enabled him to believe because he felt, and hence to reveal that “God is love.” It is very remarkable, however, that his love was a trained love. Once John was more zealous than affectionate. But he began by loving the human friend, by tending the mother as a son, by attachment to his brother James; and so, through particular personal attachments, he was trained to take in and comprehend the larger Divine love. I should say, then, that he was most lovable because, having loved in their various relationships “men whom he had seen, he was able to love God whom he had not seen.” He is most dear to the heart of Christ, of course, who loves most, because he has most of God in him, and that love comes through missing none of the preparatory steps of affection, given us here as Primer lessons. \* \* \*

Upon me there is a growing conviction, deepening into a feeling that is at times very solemn and very mournful, that my path lies in a different direc-

tion—in humble work done more humbly than I have done it—more in the valley: in simple life, more severe and more solitary. I must mete out what of existence remains to me. Like Hamlet, “I have had dreams,”\* and therefore, like him, am unable to “count myself king of infinite space.”

## XCIV.

The only shade of uneasiness that ever crosses my mind is the perhaps that it will not end so. What I have reason to fear is imbecility. They all admit that. Last night, till dawn to-day, suffering kept me awake, gnashing the teeth, or rather setting them, like poor Prometheus, in defiance of the vulture's beak. Only my vulture was feeding on my cerebellum, and digging its talons in a most uncivil and ferocious way into the organs of emotionness, philoprogenitiveness, obstinacy, etc., etc., leaving the nobler organs free. Now what is to be said for phrenology after this? Does it not refute the whole system? Had the said bird been pulling at the organs really in use by me—that is, all that is most sublime in humanity—it had been intelligible. But what business on earth has he to stick his claws into a part of my nature which from the cradle has been protested against, disowned, defied, conquered? Is it revenge being now taken for the victory, and am I to be, like the Princess in the “Arabian Nights,” consumed by the flames of the genie she had reduced to a cinder? Bad image apart, there is something in the whole matter which perplexes me as a philosophical question and a question of justice; for I know, as indeed the organs indicate, that it is not the overstrained intellect that is wearing life out, but the emotional part of nature, which all life-long has been breathing flames which kindled none and only burned itself.

## XCV.

On reaching home yesterday evening I took down Liebig's “Chemistry,” and found that the ultimate elements of organic bodies are principally four—viz., carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen. That is, the difference between hair, flesh, bone, and between skin, bark, wood, etc., is caused not so much by their being composed of different elements as by the different proportions in which these four chief ones are mixed up.

In the visions of the night a dream presented itself, mingling this information with the subjects of our conversation, and the question whether woman is merely an unemancipated negro, as you say, her powers and qualities in all respects like those of men, only uncultivated, or, as I say, a being spiritually as well as physically different—having, if you will, all the elements, moral and intellectual, the same in number as man has, only differing in the proportions in which they are mixed up; that difference, however, constituting a difference of nature as real as the difference between leaf and flower, wood and fruit. As *you* say, Woman is to man what the gristle of a child is to the hard skull of an adult; as *I* say, what the brain is to the skull, or the flesh to the ribs.

Methought I overheard the muscular fibre, *i. e.*, the flesh, of the human body enviously grumbling against the bones. The flesh averred that it was essentially identical with bone, wanting only a different position and a harder education. That great muscle in the centre of the body, the heart, took upon herself the office of champion of the rights of oppressed flesh, and spoke—“Feeble and degraded muscles! after six thousand years of abject inferiority, I summon you in the sacred name of abstract principles. Are we not identically the same as the bones? What are the bones?—carbon, oxygen,

\* Robertson was aware that the other reading—“bad dreams”—was perhaps the more correct one, but he always preferred the reading in the text of his letter.

hydrogen, nitrogen. What are we?—the same, minus a few pinches of phosphate of lime. The elements of our nature are identically those of bone. And yet for these long centuries we have been treated as if we were of a softer and feebler nature—condescendingly, insultingly protected from outward injury, as if we could not protect ourselves; looked upon as the ornament, and living beauty of the bones; treated—I blush with shame to say it—as the cushions on which the bones repose, as if we were merely existing for their solace and relaxation. Even I, of bonier texture than you, poor slaves! I am bone-locked and hemmed in on every side, unable to expand, cabined, cribbed, confined, forbidden from the development of my noble nature by the coercion of a horrid jealous rib!

(For it may be remarked that the heart, albeit proud of being less soft and less sensitive than other muscles, was yet unable to restrain the use of certain spasmodic *dashed* words, like “horrid,” which betrayed the existence of more nervous substance and sensibility than she would willingly have admitted. And the occurrence of these, in the midst of slang-like and bonier expressions, produced sometimes an odd confusion.)

Some very tender muscles, situated at the extremity of the fingers, spoke in reply to the swelling heart thus:

“Wondrous sister! thy words are full of awe; and we have been thrilled with the mighty conception which thou hast suggested to us of being as the bones! But let us take sweet counsel together. Dost not thou sit in the centre of the body, determining the quality of every atom of carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen, before it passes into the bones? Are not we, then, through thee, our great mother, arbiters of the destiny of those bones, whom thou, with divine indignation, callest horrid? We know that thou art less feebly sensitive than many of us, for we recollect how, in the days of Charles II., thou wast handled alive by a surgeon, and didst not flinch any more than if thou hadst been bone. But we pray thee to consider what would be our fate were we to change our nature. Should we not *wear* out by our friction, instead of elastically rebounding? Does not our very shrinking save us? Nay, would not the bones be harder still than we, and instead of, as now, loving us and forbearing pressure, *come through us*, if we did not feel? Besides, some of us have a secret liking for those bones, feel their support, and cling with great affection to our ribs. Thou speakest of great principles, which we do not understand—oxygen and hydrogen. Thou art very wise, and we are very foolish—we only know that flesh is flesh and bone is bone. Thou sayest flesh is bone; but we can not help thinking that we are as nature made us, and better so. Thou meditatetest, mighty philosopheress! on nitrogen and carbon. To us bones are dear. We think that all the discipline which thou recommendest would make us only firmer and healthier flesh, but flesh still, and that only by destruction of our nature could we become bone. We do not wish the bones ever to forget that we are flesh, or to treat us as bone treats bone. We should as soon expect a gentleman in the course of conversation to forget the difference of sex—to consider only mind *versus* mind, and, smiting the feminine possessor of the mind upon the shoulder, to say, “Come, hold your jaw, old fellow.” Most magnanimous heart! we are very tender, and do not like to have it forgotten that we are made of flesh and blood.”

Methought the heart heaved with scorn, and replied:

“Ye concrete feebleness! I am, then, not as ye are. The abstract principles of my nature are identical with those of the tyrants. I will alter the proportions; I will appropriate a little of the lime which the heartless bones monopolize. I, too, will be a bone.” (“Heartless bones.” N.B.—This was the last touching inconsistency of the flesh of which the heart was ever guilty.)

She persisted in her resolve. By degrees her eloquent and throbbing utter-

ances became stilled in silence. She got harder and harder, and knocked against the ribs, blow for blow, giving knocks and receiving them with interest. The last wish she expressed was to be made acquainted with Anatomy practically, being certain that she should be as callous to the knife as any bone.

She got her wish; but it was not until she had become ossified.

Upon the *post-mortem* examination I could not, however, but remark that, even denaturalized as her discipline had made her, she did not look like genuine healthy bone, but a sort of gristle, neither red nor white, neither hard nor soft, but tough—altogether an unnatural, morbid, amorphous mass, like unprepared caoutchouc when you cut it through, only not so elastic.

The surgeon shrugged his shoulders, and dropped her into a jar of spirits of wine, to take her place among the monstrosities of an anatomical museum, observing that she was too hard for a feminine pin-cushion and too soft for a masculine cannon-ball.

Glenara, Glenara, now read me my dream.

#### XCVI.

May 7.

— was very enthusiastic about Louis Blanc, his philanthropy, his *beaux yeux noirs* and *pensées*, his aristocratic bearing, and *bien gantées* hands. It is very difficult, in a woman's enthusiasm for a system, to eliminate the adventurous and personal influences and get at the real amount of intelligent and genuine admiration of the *belles idées* which remains as a residuum behind. Ravignan and socialism—nay, perhaps I may add with a little sly malice, Mazzinianism, mesmerism, to say nothing of homœopathy—would contend against us, dull, careworn expositors of threadbare truths, with fearful odds on their side, if *beaux yeux noirs* and white gloves are to be unconsciously accepted as legitimate weapons.

I am sorry I could not go with you to the Exhibition opening, but as circumstances then were it would have been impossible. I was in a very small humor for any enjoyment whatever. For myself I do not feel the smallest regret. Gala days and processions never, even as a boy, gave me any pleasure, and I always feel inclined to moralize in the Hamlet vein when I see grown men and women playing at theatricals off the stage. For instance, the pageant which I saw on the opening of Parliament suggested no thoughts but those which belong to a sense of the ridiculous. A review, suggesting the conception of a real battle, is a different thing, and impresses me to tears. I can not see a regiment manœuvre nor artillery in motion without a choking sensation, but pomps with feathers and jewels and fine carriages always make me sad or else contemptuous. Pageants never leave a sense of grandeur, but always of meanness and paltriness, on my mind. It is not so with a mountain or a picture. I would far, far rather go through the Exhibition without a crowd, and quietly get a few ideas, as I trust I shall do.

I am delighted to find that you enjoy the Exhibition. When did I despise it as a frivolous thing? The pomp of the procession I can not care for—the Exhibition itself is improving and intellectual.

#### XCVII.

Ralph King, Lady Lovelace's son, who has taken a strange fancy to venerate me, came down from town with his tutor to be at church on Sunday, by his own wish. He came to breakfast with me on Monday, and with great *naïveté* and originality expressed his interest in the view I had taken on Sunday of the non-spirituality of the yearning for death, and remarked "that it was suicide without the courage of suicide." An evangelical lady came into the vestry to express her bewilderment at the doctrine. I replied

that I thought it was best to set a standard that was real, actual, and human, not one either insincerely or morbidly professed; that many an evangelical clergyman, after an ultra-spiritual discourse, in which desire for heaven and God at once was taught as the only Christian feeling, would go home and sit over his glass of port very comfortably, satisfied with it as before, until heaven comes—which I considered a sure way of making all unreal. “Well,” said she, “I thought you, of all people, were like St. Paul, and that you would wish for a heavenlier life as much as he did.” “First of all,” said I, “you thought wrong; next, if I do wish to die, it is when I am in pain, or out of conceit with life, which happens pretty often, but which I do not consider spirituality. It is only an ungracious way of saying, ‘I am dissatisfied with what Thou hast given me, and do not like the duties that are mine at all. I am in pain, and want to be out of pain;’ and I suppose a great many very commonplace people could say the same piece of sublime discontent. Could not you?”

The fair saint was silenced.

### XCVIII.

*To a Member of his Congregation.*

Brighton, May 9, 1851.

MY DEAR —, —I thank you much for the interesting letter you sent me, which I inclose. I did not know Mr. — beyond the acquaintance of a single evening, but was extremely pleased with his son-in-law. He is at rest, I doubt not, now—in that deep, awful rest which is the most endearing of all the attributes of the life that shall be—the rest which is order instead of disorder—harmony instead of chaotic passions in jar and discord, and duty instead of the conflict of self-will with His loving will. It is a noble thought, and I never hear of any one who has probably attained it without a feeling of congratulation rising to the lips. You sign yourself “gratefully.” If that is in reference to any good in instruction you may think you have derived from my ministry—and I can conceive no other—there is in the kind feeling far more to humble me than to give me joy. May God bless you!

### XCIX.

*To the Same.*

Brighton, May 16, 1851.

MY DEAR —, —I am deeply grateful for your note, but, I can only say again, more surprised and humbled by it than even gladdened. Yet I can rejoice, if not for my own sake, yet for yours. That a ministry full of imperfection and blind darkness should do *any* good is a source to me of ever new wonder. That one in which words and truth, if truth come, wrung out of mental pain and inward struggle, should now and then touch a corresponding chord in minds with which, from invincible and almost incredible shyness, I rarely come in personal contact, is not so surprising, for I suppose the grand principle is the universal one—we can only heal one another with blood—whether it comes from the agony itself, or the feeble and meaner pains of common minds and hearts. If it were not for such rewards and consolations unexpectedly presenting themselves at times, the Christian ministry would be, at least to some minds, and in the present day, insupportable. Once more, thank you. I do trust, with all my heart, that your estimate of the effects of what you hear on your own heart may not be delusive. I know that spoken words impress, and that impression has its danger as well as its good. Hence I can not even rejoice without fear, for I confess that at best pulpit instruction seems to me to be as pernicious as it is efficacious. And Carlyle’s view of stump oratory is only too mournfully true. To spend life and waste all



strength of nerve and heart upon it, seems like a duty of sowing the sea-sand.

Still, some good is done, but much less than people think; and the drawback, which you correctly state, is one which must always be allowed for as a very large deduction from its apparent effects—I mean the absence of any immediate opportunity of carrying transient impressions into action, and the exhaustion of the feelings which are perpetually stimulated for no definite result.

At the highest, all I count on is the probability that in many minds a thought here and there may strike root and grow, mixing with life and ordinary trains of feeling a somewhat higher tone than otherwise might have been, and bringing forth results which will be unconscious and utterly untraceable to the mind that originated them, just as it would be impossible to say whence the thistle-down came, that is resulting now in a plentiful crop of weeds, alas!—the simile is an ominous one—on the downs above.

C.

*To the Same.*

Brighton May 17, 1851.

MY DEAR —,—I send you back Carlyle's letter. I have read Bushnell; there are some good things in him, but on the whole I think him most shadowy and unsatisfactory. He does not sufficiently show that dogmas express eternal verities and facts; that they are what a mathematician might call approximative formulas to truth. In this spirit I always ask—what does that dogma mean? Not what did it mean in the lips of those who spoke it? How, in my language, can I put into form the underlying truth, in correcter form if possible, but in only approximative form after all? In this way purgatory, absolution, Mariolatry, become to me fossils, not lies.

Of course people speak bitterly against my teaching, and of course I feel it keenly. But I can not help it, and I can not go out of my way to conciliate opposition and dislike. Misapprehension will account for part. Partly the divergence is real. But to place the spirit above the letter, and the principle above the rule, was the aim of His Life, and the cause of the dislike he met with: therefore I am content. And this, by-the-way, affords an answer to one part of your perplexity—viz., whether it be not dangerous to draw so exact a parallel between His office and ours? I only reply that, except in feeling a fellowship and oneness with that Life, and recognizing parallel feelings and parallel struggles, triumphantly sometimes, I do not see how life could be tolerable at all. He was Humanity, and in Him alone my humanity becomes intelligible. Do not tremble at difficulties and shoreless expanses of truth, if you feel drifting into them. God's truth must be boundless. Tractarians and Evangelicals suppose that it is a pond which you can walk round and say, "I hold the truth." What, all? "Yes, all; there it is, circumscribed, defined, proved, and you are infidel if you do not think this pond of mine, that the great Mr. Scott, and Mr. Newton, and Mr. Cecil dug, quite large enough to be the immeasurable Gospel of the Lord of the universe."

Dare to be alone with God, my dear —, trust Him, and do not fear that He will leave you in darkness long, though His light may dazzle. Was not He alone in this world?—unfelt, uncomprehended, suspected, spoken against? And before Him was the cross. Before us, a little tea-table gossip, and hands uplifted in holy horror. Alas! and we call that a cross to bear. Shame! yet still I do admit, that for a loving heart to lack sympathy is worse than pain. Do not hesitate to ask me about any thing that I say, if it seem difficult. I would gladly explain to any of my congregation any thing I meant to say, if I said it obscurely, or if it seemed to conflict with their conceptions. But to you, at any time, I will with true enjoyment give such explanation, so never doubt about asking me.

## CI.

*To the Same.*

Brighton, May 21, 1851.

MY DEAR —,—The question you put is by no means an easy one to answer: whether, namely, it be right and wise for you to read on both sides of the question—or rather, I should say, questions? for on this subject they are endless, and grow up like Hydra's heads.

I could not reply, No; for that is the very advice given by the Romish Church, which we so much blame; and it is very inconsistent in us to condemn their prohibitions of heretical or Protestant books to the laity, if we, Tractarian or Evangelical clergy, forbid, as is constantly done, the perusal of books which we judge heretical. We say they are afraid of the truth, else they would not forbid inquiry; and I do not see why Unitarians, Rationalists, or Skeptics, might not retort the same charge on us. The fact, however, that they who so condemn the Romish Church find themselves compelled to very inconsistently imitate their conduct, is a proof, I think, that even in that most anti-Protestant proceeding there is a truth, inevitably acted on by every one in his own way, if we could only disengage it.

Now, first of all, the questions of religious truth are interminable, and a lifetime would scarcely suffice to even pass the outworks of them all. Next, very few minds are in possession of the means or of the severe mental training which qualifies a man to set out as an original discoverer of truth; so that if we can not begin with a large number of truths, which must be considered as first principles and settled, life must be one perpetual state of Pyrrhonism and uncertainty.

On the other hand, to refuse to examine when doubts arise is spiritual suicide; and I do not see how, on this principle, any progress in truth could ever have been made. Why should the Pharisees have been blamed for the views so long stereotyped on the Jews for remaining in Judaism?

One consolation, however, at once suggests itself. The condition of arriving at truth is not severe habits of investigation, but innocence of life and humbleness of heart. Truth is felt, not reasoned, out; and if there be any truths which are only appreciable by the acute understanding, we may be sure at once that these do not constitute the soul's life, nor error in these the soul's death. For instance, the metaphysics of God's Being; the "*plan*," as they call it, "of salvation;" the exact distinction between the divine and human in Christ's Person. On all these subjects you may read and read till the brain is dizzy and the heart's action is stopped; so that of course the mind is bewildered. But on subjects of Right and Wrong, Divine and Diabolic, Noble and Base, I believe sophistry can not puzzle so long as the life is right.

I should say, therefore,

1st. Remember how much is certain. Is there any doubt about the Sermon on the Mount? Whether for instance, the Beatitudes are true to fact? Whether the pure in heart shall see God? Any doubt, whether to have the mind of Christ be salvation and rest? Well, if so, you may be content to leave much, if God will, to unfold itself slowly; if not, you can quietly wait for Eternity to settle it.

2d. I think the only thing that can be said is broadly this: I would not read controversially. In this bewildered age of "Yeast" (by-the-by, the author of "Yeast" ought not to cry out about fermentation, unless he can show how it can be made bread, nor ought any one, duty now being rather to be silent)—in this age of "Yeast," an age in which, like Diana's worshippers, all are crying out loudly, the greater part not knowing why, or what the questions really are, it seems to me that the more we confine ourselves to simple duties the better. Be assured that there is little to be known here: much to

be borne : something to be done. What you are, and what your life means, you do not know. God only knows. You must be content with twilight, except when contrast with darkness makes the twilight seem, as it really is in comparison, a blaze of light.

Specially, in your own case, would not this be your duty? You have regular appointed teaching with which you are not dissatisfied. I should be the last to urge you to blind yourself by it, or refuse to receive light from any other quarter which, *presenting itself*, might make that teaching seem wrong; but so long as it appears to you not darkness, but light, surely it would be wisest, for your own peace and the harmony of your life, not to go *out of the way* to investigate and seek for views which may make that little light questionable. Try, rather, to live upon the truths you have for certain, and let them become firmer and firmer. How can you expect to fathom questions in which the wisest of the age have been sounding in vain? This conviction once settled, I think we shall become content to wait—a great lesson; and let God teach us by degrees, instead of fancying we can find it all out by effort. Do you remember Wordsworth's—

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum  
Of things forever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?

We do not trust God; we trust ourselves. We do not believe that He seeks us; we fancy we have to seek Him. We are anxious to know *all about* God, and meanwhile we never think of knowing *God*. God, instead of religion, and, much more, God, instead of theology, is what we need to believe in.

I would avoid all controversy, written or spoken, if I were you. Controversy with acquaintances mystifies, renders you suspected, and embitters your own heart. Besides, how can you explain what you think or feel with no indorsed words which will be honored, as the bankers say? Then the controversial books of the day are so merely "Yeast," that they will leave your mind bewildered. I myself follow this plan as much as possible. I mix little with the religious world, and so avoid discussion. I read little of divinity, much more of literature, though that, from mental prostration, is now next to nothing. And I try to trust in God—God and my own soul; there is nothing else to trust to. And I am sure I should be giving you dreary advice were I to say, read on all sides of the question. No, I rather say: trust in God—live in Him—do His will—and rest.

## CII.

— is a very sensible, good, and, I should think, wise man. I like what he says about the impossibility of any man being comprehensive, and not French, German, English, etc. There has been but one Son of *Man*.

Poor Comte! I recollect that there is in his work the usual amount of French vanity and nationality, which mars every thing great. They have not a world-wide man: with all our egotism, we have. And, indeed, I think all our greatest men are more universal, more submissive to eternal and not merely conventional laws. Compare the Duke and Napoleon, though the talent of the latter was probably far greater.

Well, I care very little for the progress of society, if that only means that, some centuries hence, individuals will eat, drink, and sleep more abundantly and more cleanly than the masses now, those individuals being mortal, perishable, and dying out forever. They take away all that makes humanity grand, and then ask you to care for it and its progress. I care for religion—for the hope of a *church*; that is, a society more united in each other, because more united in God. But separate from that, and the possibilities of noble-

ness which that involves, the destinies of the race appear to me little more interesting than the contemplation of the prospects of a tray of silkworms—obscene and crawling reptiles, which may hereafter become moths, and die when the eggs are only laid. The whole universe, in this aspect, is to me a hideous phantasm—the cruel practising-shop of some demon experimentalist, who creates Frankensteins to be wretched and accursed, and makes them better every new attempt. Pleasant consolation for us—no! me, the Frankenstein, to know that some centuries hence there will be no more anomalous, semi-noble, semi-banned, and blighted Frankensteins.

No, no, no! There is some better thing than that; and French atheism must get a human, humble, loving heart before it can even guess what.

## CIII.

May, 1851.

I send you a letter which I received from Mr. Drew, pressing me into the service. This morning I had a long visit from Mr. Maurice, which kept me from writing to you at length. His countenance is benign, full of thought, marked with sorrow—but conquered sorrow. Probably, from knowing his mind beforehand, I read large powers of sympathy with Humanity. He told me, simply and strongly, that he had seen and been pleased with my published addresses. I ought not to have said a long visit: it was under an hour, as he had to go off by the eleven o'clock train. I again declined joining in the course of lectures—this time chiefly on the ground of health, for, indeed, I feel shattered, mentally unfit for such an effort, nor have I any desire left for prominence; the valley of existence is most fit for me. I am young enough in years, but too gray in heart, to buffet with the mountain tempests which blow on more lofty situations. Maurice, gentlemanly and calm, about fifty years of age, spoke less than I did. I was ashamed to feel that I had the talking to myself, and learned nothing except a lesson of humility. He thinks that the clergy of the Church of England may be now the leaders of the nation, if they will only give up the phantom of power for its reality, and sympathize with the working-classes heartily and truly.

I have to be at the lecture to-night, so I must conclude.

## CIV.

May 24.

Your account of your conversation with Brewster and Ashburner is very interesting. Some time ago I know that Faraday said he considered that they were just in sight of the discovery of the principle of life, "the distant discovery was already felt trembling along the line." It is enough to make one's brain reel, indeed, to think on these things.

It appears to me, however, that great mistakes are made in the expectations entertained with respect to what science can do. The scientific mode of viewing things is simply human: it is not God's way. Creation is one thing, dissection is another. Dissection separates into organic parts, shows the flesh laid on the skeleton, etc.; but God did not make first a skeleton and then flesh. Life organized to itself its own body. And so, too, according to Science, the final cause of the sensibility of the skin, and the insensibility of the parts below the skin, is the protection of the parts most exposed from injury. The extremities of the fingers are most sensitive; the heart and bones have few nerves. Had this been reversed, had the skin been apathetic and the interior parts sensitive, great pain would have been the result, to no purpose, and the parts exposed might have been destroyed, burnt, or broken without giving warning of danger; whereas, as it is, the most delicate parts, like the eyelid, are protected by an acute sensibility, which defends them at the most distant approach of injury.

Well, the anatomist says the final cause of this arrangement—that is, the end which was the cause of its being so arranged—was the protection of the structure. Of course the anatomist can go no farther; but there are ends, which the anatomist's science does not even touch, subserved by these sensibilities—the education, for instance, of the character and heart through pain; a much higher end, properly speaking, more truly the final cause of pain than the preservation of the organic frame-work from harm. In all such departments Science must forever be at fault. She has not the organ nor the intuitive sense whereby their truths are discovered. It is like attempting to explain the ecstasies of music by mathematics. Mathematics have to do with music, because music coincides with mathematical truths and principles; but there is something in music which no mere mathematician can pronounce upon or discover—a something which the very child who has an ear knows by intuition. He can tell the child, and Jenny Lind herself, the laws on which her science rests, much better than Jenny Lind knows, or with the deepest study could know; but then the spirit and life of it—he is a miserable *charlatan* if he pretends to say a word about them as discovered, or even discoverable, by mathematical science.

So with electricity, phrenology, etc.; they can tell us phenomena, but what lies beyond those phenomena they can not tell forever. And the pretense to do it is the great absurdity of these *charlatans* like Mr. Atkinson and Co. Christ told us, but by the intuitions of the soul, not by science.

I wonder whether this is intelligible, for I am so really worn in mind, far rather than in body, that I can scarcely get my mind to work at the simplest thought without a sensation of restlessness. I wish it were not so, but this will all come round with time and rest.

## CV.

Thanks for the information respecting Mrs. ——. I am afraid to go, lest my conception of the characters should be again linked with inferior associations. I do not think any woman could understand Macbeth or Macduff, only because both their good and bad are essentially masculine. And Lady Macbeth must be either sublime or ludicrous. Twenty to one on the latter. I wish I had heard “*Midsummer Night's Dream*,” but I was otherwise engaged.

I return Sterling, etc. You must take the consequences of reading “*The Law of Man's Nature*.” It is a book thoroughly worthless, but it also leaves a mental degradation which I would not accept as the price of the highest intellectual banquet. The author has done with humanity what a certain lady did with a bone of a brother's skeleton—made a whistle of it, and with equal good taste and good feeling. Luckily the concord of sweet sounds was not very bewitching in either case; and if you persevere in hearing the whole concert, you will have more patience and less inclination to wince from the discords of a heart out of tune from vanity than I had. I felicitate you upon your prospect of drinking-in for two days the music of the charnel-house. By-the-by, there is one inference worth drawing from the book. Whoever dethrones God and sneers at Christ must end in some such worship as—the idolatry of Mr. Mesmerist Atkinson.

## CVI.

June, 1851.

In a letter I have just read of H. Martineau's, she says that her life was a series of abject discipleships till now, when she is “independent.” I am glad you dislike the book. It is the most offensive I have read for a long time—not because of its atheism, naked as that is, but because of the impertinent assumption of superiority which characterizes the letters of these in-

spired two. I can conceive a severe science compelling a mind step by step to the atheistic conclusions; and that mind, loyal to truth, refusing to ignore the conclusions or to hide them. But then I can only conceive this done in a noble sadness, and a kind of divine infinite pity towards the race which are so bereft of their best hopes; and have no patience with a self-complacent smirk which says, "Shut up the prophets; read Martineau and Atkinson. Friendship, Patriotism, are mesmerized brain; Faith a mistake of the stomach; Love a titillatory movement occurring in the upper part of the nape of the neck; Immortality the craving of dyspepsia; God a fancy produced by a certain pressure upon the gray parts of the hasty-pudding within the skull; Shakspeare, Plato, Hannibal, and all they did and wrote, weighed by an extra ounce or two of said pudding."

It is the flippant tone in which the most solemn hopes of the noblest humanity are disposed of that disgusts me. Besides, the angelic pair have deduced from their premises a conclusion of disproved, instead of not proven, which is all that science can ever pretend to show. She is inexcusable for saying that her limited capacities are to be the measure of all that is knowable. If there be a cause in this universe the effect of which she can not perceive, that cause may be God, which simple possibility is quite sufficient to upset all she advances.

## CVII.

June, 1851.

I send you the article on Carlyle. Pray read it. It contains *some* truth, and much falsehood—the truth itself so torn from coherence with other parts of Carlyle's meaning as to be false. For instance, in column 2 he says that Carlyle reckons Christianity the most palpable sham and cobweb that ever superstition and hypocrisy invented; which is simply a slander and a lie, as he might have seen by a quotation he makes himself in column 3: "Sterling read a great deal; earnest books—the Bible, *most earnest* of books, and his chief favorite."

Lie the second may be found where he says that the only persons for whom Carlyle's heart seems to beat with congenial sympathy are the anarchists of Europe, etc. And this after reading Carlyle's "French Revolution" (if he did).

Of course the critique contains truth. Carlyle does cry out too much, in a way that has now become cant, against cant and shams, never even hinting a remedy; but this reviewer has never got into the atmosphere which he breathes, nor attempted to master his meaning and objects, without which thorough comprehension no one has a right to criticise.

## CVIII.

June, 1851.

Thanks for "Owen." I fear I shall have no time to read him, but I will try.

The necessarian scheme is intellectually impregnable; practically, an enormous falsehood; and in matters practical popular ideas are right, just as they are in metaphysical. There can be no Matter, metaphysics say, and say, it seems to me, irrefragably; but the popular conception is practically the true one, and the very highest philosophy, when it has completed the circle, gets back to that again.

So of the necessarian scheme. It is a half-truth, and we shall flounder away into fearful self-correction if we take the "Constitution of Man" instead of the prophets, economic well-being instead of the Gospel, and pet vice and crime as amiable diseases. I am still, in *many cases*, for the Christian virtue of an English oak-stick, with an English hand to lay it on, and show mercy when you have done justice.

Nevertheless, even this one-sided scheme contains a truth. It is quite true

that poverty comes from crime; but it is also true that crime is often the result of poverty. Craniology, education, circumstances, etc., are causes, and must not be ignored. But they are not the only causes, and there is a something which can rise above them all nobly. Else I think the defense of the prisoner to his judge, when tried for stealing, was unanswerable: *Mais, mon Dieu, monsieur, il faut vivre.*

In my humble opinion, the judge's reply, however, on necessarian principles, was quite as philosophical when he said, *Je ne vois pas la nécessité*, and sentenced the thief to death.

I was well aware of the fact about the invisibility of the sunbeam till it impinges on earthly particles. Therefore I hold this visible universe to be the word or expression of God, who is visible thereby. I do not hold "material manifestations insufficient for spirituality," and only interrogate each such manifestation, "Of what art thou a manifestation?" For instance, a Lord Mayor's feast is a manifestation, and a very material one, of large resources, great contrivance, and vast aldermanic intellect. I acknowledge that I find it insufficient to prove great spirituality, though it is to a Greenlander's train-oil feast what the Exhibition is to his canoe. Multiply the alderman's paradise by the accumulated science of a thousand years, and I do not think it proves us a bit nearer the conversion of this earth into a kingdom of God. I will accept, however, a dish of *un-crimped* cod on a Christian's table, if you can find it, as such an evidence; or a soup-kitchen, or a ducal suggestion of curry-powder for starving people, provided it comes off his own plate. But the invention of piquant sauces, luxurious furniture, tasteful jewelry, etc., etc., etc., I humbly decline to accept as proofs of any thing beyond the fact that man is a very sagacious and surprising beaver. A spirit? *Non, mille fois non*, unless he can show something more than this. Poor Robert Owen's book, right or wrong, raises Humanity, in my eyes, above a thousand Exhibitions. Cheops and Cephrenes built great pyramids; so did Rhamsinitus, a brick one, very marvellous in its day—a new era in building, they say, as when glass superseded brick. The spirituality of those "material manifestations?" Mummy of the sacred cat! whose dry carcass has rested there these three thousand years at the expense of the life and breath of the myriad wretches who toiled for their pay of a few onions—say how we shall unswathe the spirituality of that most manifest materialism out of thy most holy cements. And yet I fancy the progress of the race was made thereby "patent to the masses," by a very royal patent! I grant the grandeur of the understanding and "beaverism." I only say that I measure the spirituality of the grandest undertaking by the degrees of its unselfishness.

Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow:  
The rest is all but leather and prunella.

## CIX.

June, 1851.

I have been reading some of Leigh Hunt's works lately, the "Indicator," "A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla," and am surprised at the freshness, and sweetness, and Christian, not lax, spirit of human benevolence and toleration which existed in the heart of one who was the contemporary, and even colleague, of Byron. The "Indicator," a series of papers like the "Spectator," etc., is a most refreshing collection of ancient stories and kind-hearted literary gossip. The "Jar of Honey" is, in fact, nothing more than a collection of all the sweet things that poetry has hived up for centuries in the literature of Sicily, from the times of Polyphemus, etc., etc., down to those of Theocritus, and even to the present day. There is, no very transcendent talent anywhere, but good taste, refinement, tolerably extensive reading, and the springiness of a kind heart, imparting a life and newness to all he says.

You were unfortunate about Covent Garden Market ; but it is not always so. Sometimes the brightness of that hour in London is very remarkable. Your description of the fog, dirt, smoke, bustle, etc., made me feel how little, how very, very little, we know and think of the suffering life of our fellow-creatures. To get a dish of green peas or young potatoes on a West-End table, how much toil and unknown deprivation must be gone through by human beings ! It seems to me a great and good lesson to go through these crowded places to see what life is—the life of the millions, not the few—and then to think of our aesthetics, as Kingsley said—and our life one long pursuit of enjoyment, and disappointment if we do not get it. When life to us, from mere heat, is simply endurance, what must it be to those who have only the shady side of a burning house to shelter them, and that only for a few minutes?—for if they stop, there will be no supper that day at home.

About Pascal's opinion that, as beauty perishes, attachment for the sake of beauty is not attachment—well, I do not know. Mind gets weak ; therefore to be attached to a person for mental qualification is not, etc., etc. ; and character changes, therefore he who was attached to that which did not last was not attached at all. I do not think this is true. Beauty may be a lower cause of attachment, but I suppose persons may be really attached *for* that, not merely *to* that ; and quite true that in a low nature that will be a low attachment. I do not think that in a high one it must. In some it kindles high and self-devoted feelings, just as in a degraded and sensual nature it produces selfish ones. Besides, it is untrue to say that *la petite vérole* will extinguish it necessarily ; it may have begun on account of beauty, and then gone on to something higher. Chivalry, gratitude, habits of tenderness, I believe, would retain affection, provided it had not been quenched already. No, it would not be *la petite vérole* that would undermine it, but moral deformity which had been discovered uncorresponding to outward beauty. I am quite certain that beauty attracts an unvitiated heart only because it seems, by a law of our thought, the type of mental and moral beauty ; and where these are not, disgust and reaction would come sooner and more surely than from small-pox. Further, I think that where qualities are loved and appreciated by habit, the beauty of feature is no longer observed, nor its absence missed. Expression reminds of what we know of the person, and the shape and color are actually forgotten. The ugliest man I ever knew I actually at last thought handsome ; and I do not believe that any beauty would seem surpassingly beautiful after it had once reminded of folly or evil.

## CX.

Thank you for your account of the “Associations Ouvrières.” The time is coming, no doubt, when in some form or other this principle will be tried. I do not expect that it can be the final form of human co-operation. It is too artificial, and, at present, only another shape of protection ; for which reason I can not feel very enthusiastic about the “self-sacrifice” which you think it implies. However, I am willing to accept it as a step to better things. That inalienable capital which your friends are forming, to belong only to the association, will, after a time, become the capital of a wealthy corporation ; and if many such corporations should arise, the struggle of the next generation will be to break them down : they will be bloated aristocracies of the year 2000, and the chivalry of that age will be exhibited in a crusade against them.

The elective affinities can not hold five men together for a month. I wonder where we shall find a principle of cohesion to bind men together really, except interest ; for chartisms and socialisms are only this.

I saw a family of love at the Zoological Gardens—five leopards together, kissing and playing with one another. By-and-by a keeper came with sundry



joints of a murdered sheep. The brothers began to growl and bite, each seized a bone and went off to his corner, snarling, and unable to enjoy for fear.

## CXI.

To a Roman Catholic Friend.

July 1, 1851.

MY DEAR MRS. —, —I will briefly answer your question. What am I? Not an eclectic, certainly.

An eclectic is one who pieces together fragmentary opinions culled out of different systems on some one or other principle of selection.

I endeavor to seize and hold the spirit of every truth which is held by all systems under diverse, and often in appearance contradictory, forms.

I will give you an instance.

A very short time ago, Mrs. Jameson was showing me the sketches she had made for her new work on Christian Art, exhibiting the gradual progress in the worship of the Virgin.

At first the sculptures were actual copies of known heathen goddesses with a child in arms; then the woman kneeling before the Son; next the woman crowned, on a throne with the Son, but lower; after that, on the same throne on a *higher* level; lastly, the Son in wrath, about to destroy the universe, and the mother interposing her woman's bosom in intercession. These were distinctly different in date.

Well, I remembered at once, this is what the evangelicals do in another way. They make two Gods, a loving one and an angry one—the former saving from the latter. Both, then, agree in this, that the anger and the love are expressed as resident in different personalities.

Now here I get a truth. Not by eclecticism, taking as much of each as I like, but that which both assert; and then I dispense with the formal expression of the thought. The Son and the Virgin, the Father and the Son, opposed to each other; this is the form of thought, in both false; the human mind's necessity of expressing objectively the opposition of two truths by referring them to different personalities, leaving them thus distinct, real, and undestroyed by a namby-pamby blending of the two into one, I recognize as the truth of both.

The evangelical "scheme" of reconciling justice with mercy I consider the poorest effort ever made by false metaphysics. They simply misquote a text. That he might be just [and yet] the justifier. Whereas St. Paul says, the just and the justifier; *i. e.*, just *because* the justifier. The Romish view is as usual materialistic, but both express the same felt necessity. And, in fact, truth is always the union of two contradictory propositions, both remaining undiluted—not the *via media* between them.

The Romish view, however coarsely and materially, expresses another truth. In Christ is "neither male nor female." Now the common view of His incarnation had only exhibited the fact that man, meaning the masculine sex, had become in Him divine. Soon, however, the world began to feel—womanly qualities are divine too. Not the courage and the wisdom, which used to be deified, but the graces which Christianity has emphatically pronounced blessed. Now they did not perceive that this truth is contained in the incarnation of Him in whom met all that was most womanly and all that was most manly; that divine manhood means not divine masculineness, but divine humanity, containing both sexes as the mutual supplement of each other. Accordingly, what was left for them but to have a queen of heaven as well as a Son of God?

It is very curious that M. Comte, the French infidel, has, in his way, felt the same necessity. In his last work, I am told, he speaks of woman-worship as that which the age wants.

Thus, then, out of Evangelicalism and Romanism I get one and the same truth. And out of Romanism and Atheism I get another truth—not eclectically, but just as I should get oxygen out of rust, carbonic acid, mould, and then hold oxygen as one of the principles of the universe, because I found it in almost every thing.

My system, no doubt, is vague; but it saves me from dogmatism, for I know that my mode of expressing the truth so eliminated is just as much a form as the mode of Romanism, Evangelicalism, or Atheism, and may become just as bigoted and narrow; only I am quite saved, I believe, from gazing upon any thing but the invisible and the eternal as reality. Meanwhile I try to feel with all, not as a latitudinarian, but so far as all or any hold, even formally and bigotedly, truth. And I feel that to them in that stage, *that form* may be necessary. It also keeps me humble; for I feel how almost impossible it is for a human mind to gaze on realities, essences, truths, except in the concrete—just as oxygen can only be seen in combination with iron, for instance, when it becomes rust; with sulphur, when it becomes sulphuric acid, etc., etc.

Humanly speaking, therefore, it is impossible that I could ever become an Evangelical, a Romanist, or an Infidel. Neither of the two first, because I feel that they have only poor forms of truth, materialistic and metaphysical: not the last, because I feel too deeply, even in his negations, truth; in his “It is not,” how much more truly “Something is.”

I am blind and ignorant; but I can see this at least, that the blue, red, yellow, etc., reflected from sky and bush and sea, are not the light itself, but only reflected fragments of the light; the “elements of the world” on which the light is broken, but yet made visible. Some day you will feel this. *I think you feel it now*, and suspect that Romanism is not finality, but only uncouth stammerings of truth, and very, very coarse.

## CXII.

I have had a long correspondence with Maurice and Mr. Drew. I asked Mr. Tower’s brother to dinner a day or two ago. He is a sincere, earnest-minded man, very High-Church, I should think, but, like many of that school, generous and liberal. My visits among the poor to-day included two very sad cases. One, that of a poor family, the father of which is just dead, and the mother a hard-working worthy woman overwhelmed with grief, and crushed by inability to pay the funeral expenses. Only £4! And to think that £4, lavished like pence by tens of thousands of the wealthy people in this country, can make eight or nine human beings free, and the want of it reduce them nearly to starvation. I was able to promise to defray the bill—not all out of my own pocket; the gratitude and relief were touching indeed.

The other case was that of a poor creature, whom I left with what appeared an abscess in the cheek-bone. It is now pronounced cancer. The pain amounts to agony, incessant and intolerable. Morphine stupefies for a short time, and chloride of lime partly purifies the horrors of the mouth; but in that state now for months she must remain, and no earthly power can save her, scarcely any even assuage her torture. Since then I have—not laughed—no, for my laugh is now a ghastly, hollow, false lie of a thing—but I have dined, forgotten, talked, read, written, with no physical pain now to endure. How passing strange that misery of suffering is! and how questionable the right which two-thirds of the world assume to themselves of filling their ears with cotton, that the moans may not break in upon their silken repose, and that the cry of the toiling thousands may float by on the blast unheard! But suppose that cry goes up to the ears of God, and He asks, “Whom did you relieve? whom did you clothe? whom did you feed, with your tens, hundreds, or thousands?” Assuredly, protest against Kingsley who will, he

stood on a deep, awful truth, "God will yet take account of the selfishness of wealth; and His quarrel has yet to be fought out." I have been thinking lately much, sadly, self-condemningly.

Had any one preached that all the evils of anarchy and insubordination proceeded from the selfish vanities of the poorer classes, forgetting that a revolution may be goaded on, it would have been one-sided and dangerous; but as soon as ever a man is found to state somewhat too strongly the case of the weak against the strong, the Churchman cries "Danger!" Danger to comfort and property, I suppose, which is the only danger that wakes up a protest.

Do not be dismayed or discouraged if the reading of the Scripture does not suggest as yet. Receive, imbibe, and then your mind will create; but our mistake lies in thinking that we can give out until we have taken in. In all things this is the order. Poets are creators, because recipients; they open their hearts wide to Nature, instead of going to her with views of her ready-made and second-hand. They come from her and give out what they have felt and what she said to them; so with Scripture—patient, quiet, long, revering, listening to it; then suggestiveness.

### CXIII.

July, 1851.

I wish I did not hate preaching so much, but the degradation of being a Brighton preacher is almost intolerable. "I can not dig, to beg I am ashamed;" but I think there is not a hard-working artisan whose work does not seem to me a worthier and higher being than myself. I do not depreciate spiritual work—I hold it higher than secular; all I say and feel is, that by the change of times the pulpit has lost its place. It does only part of that whole which used to be done by it alone. Once it was newspaper, schoolmaster, theological treatise, a stimulant to good works, historical lecture, metaphysics, etc., all in one. Now these are partitioned out to different officers, and the pulpit is no more the pulpit of three centuries back, than the authority of a master of a household is that of Abraham, who was soldier, butcher, sacrificer, shepherd, and emir in one person. Nor am I speaking of the ministerial office; but only the "stump orator" portion of it—and that I can not but hold to be thoroughly despicable.

I had an hour's baiting from Mrs. — yesterday, in reference, no doubt, to what the papers have been saying, and to reports of my last sermons. She talked very hotly of the practice of laying all faults at the door of the aristocracy, whereas it was the rich city people, on whom she lavished all her (supposed) aristocratic scorn, who were in fault, because they would live like nobles. Besides, did not the nobles spend their money, and was not that support of the poor? I wasted my time in trying to explain to her that expenditure is not production; that £50,000 a year spent is not £50,000 worth of commodities produced, and adds nothing to the real wealth of the country. I tried to show her that twenty servants are not supported by their master, but by the laborers who raise their corn and make their clothes; and that twenty being taken off the productive classes throws so much more labor upon those classes. Of course such things are necessary; only employment does not create any thing. Men engaged in carrying dishes or in making useless roads are employed, no doubt. But this labor does the country no good; and the paying of them for their labor, or the mere giving in charity, may make a fairer distribution of the wealth there is, but does not go one step towards altering the real burden of the country or producing new wealth. Extravagant expenditure impoverishes the country. This simple fact I could not make her comprehend. Then she got upon political preaching—abused it very heartily—acknowledged that religion had to do with man's political life, but said a clergy-

man's duty is to preach obedience to the powers that be—was rather puzzled when I asked her whether it were legitimate to preach from James v. 1: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl," etc.—asked whether it was possible for old women and orphans to understand such subjects; to which I replied, "No; and if a clergyman refuse to touch on such subjects, which belong to real actual life, the men will leave his church; and, as is the case in the Church of England, he will only have charity orphans, who are compelled to go, and old women to preach to."

On Monday I had a long visit from —. He wanted me to preach in Percy Chapel for some schools. I refused. The system of "starring" it through the country is a contemptible one. If there is a feeble light in any man, the glow-worm is the type which nature has given for his conduct, to shine or glimmer quietly in his own place, and let the winged insects come to the light if they like. Whereas the fire-flies which fly in the West Indies, obtruding themselves about in people's faces, are caught and put under a watch-glass by the inhabitants, to show them what o'clock it is by night. When they have been used up they are thrown aside, and no one stops to see whether they live or die. The quiet little glow-worm is seen only by those that love it. Birds of prey are asleep. What a pretty little fable might be made of this! For men and women it is true. She who will be admired, flashing her full-dressed radiance in the foolish or rather wise world's face, will be treated like the fire-fly, used to light up a party or to flirt with, and then, etc., etc.

#### CXIV.

"A firm belief that at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness. The angel and apostle of the coming revelation must be a woman indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful and wise: moreover, not through dusky grief, but through the ethereal medium of joy, and showing how sacred love should make us happy by the truest test of a love successful to that end."—*Helps*.

That is to me remarkable, as a coincidence with a favorite thought of mine concerning the origin of Mariolatry, which I have sometimes worked out, and also with an unmistakable tendency in the present day to revive Mariolatry, as if the truth in it were not yet got out.

It coincides, too, with the (sometimes frantic) efforts made for female emancipation, and outcries, especially in America, about their slavery; it coincides, moreover, with a philosophic speculation of M. Comte's upon this subject, who looks for the hope of the future in not hero-worship, but woman-worship.

I think it would shed a kind of setting light and glory upon the death-beds of those whose aspirations have been high, and whose work is done in this world, if, as they go out of it, they could see some such hope for the race coming in—as at the dawn of a former salvation, hearts old and worn with hopeless expectation cried, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." A work written by the author quoted above contains some interesting and valuable thoughts on this head—not quixotic. Meanwhile, the hope of a flash of illuminating light, coming suddenly, yet by degrees, like the lightning from the electricity which has gathered through the summer months, slowly, and from a woman's heart, is a very precious thought, and one which so harmonizes with my own dim anticipations, that I mean to let my mind dwell on it much; for it is well to occupy one's self with a noble hope.

Tennyson's "Vision of Sin," too mystical for most people, has long been

to me the shadowing of an awful truth; and the way in which high feelings subside into the despair of self, or scorn of others, is one of the most terrible facts of our humanity. I have seen how moral wreck and ruin here and hereafter may tremble upon the destiny of a single individual heart, and how, if such a one heart should fall into callousness or sin or recklessness, personal goodness would cease to be a matter of care; nay, dreadful to say, might become loathsome, as implying superiority to that other, and then there would be nothing left but plunge after plunge into degradation and vileness. So it is that feelings in themselves not ungenerous may become the very ministers and railroads which smooth the way for evil. At least, this is the utterance of the deepest thought on and result of what I have seen in life. It is expressed, perhaps, mystically, as it were, afar off, in indefinite and abstract terms, but it is no abstraction or vague dream.

I have caught Mr. — in some impertinent condemnations of me behind my back. I have written to him straight, to ask him whether he said it or not. If he has, I will bring the matter to a point, and stop some of these smooth gentlemen, Mr. — and Mr. — included, who are all smiles and friendliness to my face, and treat me like a heretic or an infidel behind my back. I will put a stop to this back-stairs clerical gossip and bigotry for a little time.

I have read no new book, except Leigh Hunt's "Autobiography." Leigh Hunt is interesting; he is full of little literary light gossip of Shelley, Byron, Hazlitt, Godwin, etc., and many other names I am familiar with. He has a very charitable and cheerful view of men and life; indeed, too much so for men who do great things, who are made of sterner stuff, and do not take the rose-water way of making all sweet by making the surface odoriferous and pleasant, while all below is full of misery.

## CXV.

MY DEAR —, —Your mamma showed me your questions to her, and I offered to answer them as well as I can, though it would be easier to do so *de vive voix* than on paper. That respecting the personality of the devil I have already answered in a letter to your sister, though I am not sure that it was sufficiently detailed to be quite satisfactory or intelligible. Remember, however, that the main thing is to *believe in God*, which is the chief article of all the creeds. Our salvation does not depend upon our having right notions about the devil, but right feelings about God. And if you hate evil, you are on God's side, whether there be a personal evil principle or not. I myself believe there is, but not so unquestioningly as to be able to say, I think it a matter of clear revelation. The Bible *does* reveal God, and except with a belief in God there will and can be no goodness. But I can conceive intense hatred of wrong with great uncertainty whether there be a devil or not. Indeed many persons who believe in a devil are worse instead of better for their belief, since they throw the responsibility of their acts off themselves on him. Do not torment yourself with such questions. The simpler ones are the deepest.

Next, as to St. James's assertion that "faith without works profiteth nothing;" which appears to contradict St. Paul's, who says that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

Suppose I say, "A tree can not be struck without thunder," that is true, for there is never destructive lightning without thunder. But, again, if I say, "The tree was struck by lightning without thunder," that is true, too, if I mean that the lightning alone struck it, without the thunder striking it. Yet read the two assertions together, and they seem contradictory. So, in the same way, St. Paul says, "Faith justifies without works"—that is, faith *only* is that which justifies us, not works. But St. James says, "Not a faith

which is without works." There will be works with faith, as there is thunder with lightning; but just as it is not the thunder but the lightning, the lightning without the thunder, that strikes the tree, so it is not the works which justify. Put it in one sentence—*Faith alone justifies: but not the Faith which is alone.* Lightning alone strikes, but not the lightning which is alone without thunder; for that is only summer lightning, and harmless. You will see that there is an ambiguity in the words "without and alone," and the two apostles use them in different senses, just as I have used them in the above simile about the lightning.

All this will be more plain if you consider what faith is. It is that strong buoyant confidence in God and in His love which gives energy and spirit to do right without doubt or despondency. Where God sees that, He sees the spring and fountain out of which all good springs: He sees, in short, the very life of Christ begun, and He reckons that to be righteousness; just as a small perennial fountain in Gloucestershire is the Thames, though it is not as yet scarcely large enough to float a school-boy's boat; and just as you call a small seedling not bigger than a little almond peeping above the ground, an oak: for the word "justify" means not to be made righteous, but to reckon or account righteous.

Now observe, just as you count the seven springs to be the Thames *without* a flood of waters, and without the navy that rides on the Thames, and just as you call the sapling an oak, without the acorns, so God reckons the trust in Him as righteousness, because it is the fountain and the root of righteousness, being, indeed, the life divine in the soul. He reckons it as such (that is, He justifies the soul that has it) without works—that is, before works are done, and not because of the works. But then that faith will not be without works; for the fountain *must* flow on, and the tree *must* grow, and the life of God in the soul, sanguine trust in God, the loving and good One, *must* spring up with acts; for to say that it does not would be to say that it is dead, or that it is like summer lightning, or like the gutter, which is running past my house now, after a shower of rain, and which is no perennial spring. St. Paul says, Works—mere acts—are not enough to justify us; because they are limited and imperfect. Ten thousand—a million—can not, because even a million is a limited number. Nothing can justify but faith, for faith is infinite and immeasurable like a fountain. True, replies St. James. But then do not think that St. Paul means to say that a living fount of faith will be barren without works. The faith which saves is not that kind which has no piety, but that kind which is ever prolific—"a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Tell me if this is plain, and tell me fairly and truly. I have great enjoyment in writing to you and your sisters, and I shall always have great enjoyment in answering all your questions, or in assisting you in any way I can.

#### CXVI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I will, in as short a space as I can, give you my notions on this baptismal controversy. I believe the Scripture doctrine to be this:

Christ revealed the fact that all men are God's children. He proclaimed a new name of God—the Father; and a new name of man, or Humanity—the Son; a vital union, by a Spirit ever near, ever inward—"a light lighting every man that cometh into the world." The grand distinctive truth contained in this—I say distinctive, because, *in a way*, the Jews had acknowledged God as a Father—was that God was recognized as the Father of all; not Jews only—there had lain the old falsehood—but Gentiles too. This was the Gospel, so peculiarly the essential truth of the Gospel, that St. Paul calls it "the mystery." "My gospel" is the thing hidden from ages and generations, viz., that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs. This, then, is the message to the world;

baptism is that message to the *individual*. You personally, especially, by name, A or B, are hereby informed of that truth—you are God's child. You are henceforth to live as such—not according to the old falsehood, as a child of the devil, denying God your Father, living with no resemblance to Him; but henceforth redeemed from that into privilege. There is a difference, however, between being God's child by right and God's child in fact. All who are born into the world are God's children by right. They are not so, in fact, until they recognize it, and believe it, and live as such. To believe it, and live it, is to be regenerate. For instance, had the Dauphin of France been apprenticed to the cobbler Simon till twenty years of age, he was, by right, heir to the kingdom; but, in fact, ignorant of his right, with no royal character, but with base habits. Yet you could say, those were not his proper but his false nature. Now, a revelation made to him, even by a bad man, say by Simon, of the fact, would have altered all, put him in possession of new motives, and, supposing that accession had been possible, put him in possession of the kingdom. You would, rightly, then have said that the letter conveying that intimation, authoritatively, had made him a royal child and heir of the kingdom. Yet made only in a figurative sense—made only as resting on a previous fact. That letter did not create him the first-born of France, but authoritatively revealed him as such. I believe that baptism does the same. I can, with all my heart, use the language of the catechism of the Church, and say, "In baptism I was *made* a child of God," etc.; just as a sovereign is made king by coronation, but only because he was *de jure* such before. And the act of a bad man or minister is just as valid as Simon's supposed intimation, because the fact is fact—eternal fact—whether known or not, and quite independent of his character. A heathen is God's child if he only knew it. You send a missionary to him to tell him what he is, and to bid him realize his royal character; but being God's child *de jure* avails him nothing unless he becomes such in fact—that is, changes his life and character, and becomes, like his Father, pure and holy. Then he is regenerate: God's child before unconsciously, God's child now by a second birth consciously. Nay, in fact, till now he was a child of wrath, in which again I entirely take the Church's words, "by nature a child of wrath." Yet that is not the proper real state, but the false one, unnatural and contradictory to our nature. I will only quote two or three texts: "*Because ye are sons,*" etc. Sons before regeneration. Regenerated—that is, endued with a spirit of sonship because sons. Here is the distinction *de jure* and *de facto*, the latter resting on the former. Again, "He came unto *his own,*" etc. They were his own, observe, children *de jure*. "But as many as receive Him, to them gave He power to *become* the sons of God, even as many as believed on his name truly"—his name of Father. Once more, "the like *figure* wherunto even baptism doth also now save us." It saves us *figuratively*, just as coronation *makes* a king; and therefore I love the language of the baptismal service. Baptism is, therefore, an authoritative symbol of an eternal fact; a truth of eternity realized in time, and brought down to the limits of "then and there;" then and there made God's child: but it is only the realization of a fact true before baptism, and without baptism; the personal realization of a fact which belongs to all humanity, and was revealed by Christ; in other words, it is redemption applied. I disagree both with the Bishop of Exeter and Mr. Gorham. The bishop, whose view is exactly that of the Council of Trent, holds that a miracle takes place in baptism; that one who not even by right is God's child, miraculously becomes such by the utterance of a form of words and the sprinkling of water: the Eternal descends at the spell of a man. This is incantation, not Christianity; and I object to it, because it professes to create a fact instead of witnessing to it, and being based upon it; I object to it, because it denies the great fact for which the Redeemer died, that all mankind are, *de jure*,

God's sons, and that He bids them become such *de facto*. Mr. Gorham's view is to me still more offensive. The bishop's, at least, has this advantage: it prevents sectarian narrowness, and attempts to decide who are and are not God's children, by the broad inclusion of all the baptized under that name. But Mr. Gorham holds that *sometimes* a special miracle takes place in baptism, and sometimes not; that when it does, it is in consequence of what he calls *prevenient grace*; consequently, he can not call even all baptized persons God's children, to say nothing of the race. He opens the door to sectarian uncharitableness, judgment of one another, painful attempts to decide who are and who are not the elect, and still more painful uncertainty to each individual whether *he* is presumptuous or not in believing himself God's son. It has all the evils of the bishop's views and some of its own. A man is left to the uncertain and ever-varying play of his own emotions to judge this awful question: whereas baptism was given as a pledge to rest on. I know that I have a right to claim to be His child, to live as His child, and that if I do not, I am keeping myself out of a heritage which is my own. How do I know it? Because baptism has authoritatively declared it to me. But I can not be vain, because it is a privilege not created by my feelings, but by eternal fact, and shared by the sweep who holds out his hat to me at the crossing of a street. He, too, is a child of God; my brother; and it is my shame if I treat him otherwise. God's image is in him, marred, it may be, or nearly invisible, but there. And so it was in the publicans and harlots whom Christ treated as human beings when the "religious people" of His day were very indignant at the idea. This is a grand and blessed truth taught by baptism, and not only taught but taught authoritatively, since it is not a *conventional* ordinance, but a divine command.

I do not know, my dear Mr. Trench, whether this rapid outline will be very intelligible; but every word I have written is capable of proofs and ramifications of thought which would fill quires, and I will not attempt to dilate. In reply to the question whether I think the Council have decided rightly, I should say I do. I do *not* think Mr. Gorham's view the view of the Church of England; but I think it is not irreconcilable with it, and I should be very sorry to see the Church pledged to any narrow form of thought which would exclude such shades of opinion. I have no doubt that the bishop's view is more in letter reconcilable with the Church formularies, and I doubt not has been the view held by a large number of her leading divines; but I humbly trust that I would lose every thing on earth rather than teach it or believe in it.

I envy you the society of the eagles. I would give any thing for leisure to think quietly, and get out of the jar of human life, and the perpetual necessity of talking, which consumes an amount of energy which should be thrown on action that few suspect or dream of. Count yourself happy that your life-calling is to do, and not to chatter. "Speech is of silver, silence of gold," says the German proverb; and the talker is to my mind, by necessity, the smallest of human souls. His soul must ever dwindle, dwindle, dwindle, for he utters great feelings in words instead of acts, and so satiates his need of utterance, the need of all.

#### CXVII.

I shall reply at once to some of the questions in your letter. There is really a connection in the passage you refer to, Luke xviii. 8. He had already referred to the apparent slowness with which evil is redressed—nevertheless, "God will avenge His own elect, though He bear long with them," that is, seem to delay; still, though this redress will come, when it comes, will they be expecting it? Will not hope and trust in it be worn out? "Shall the Son of Man, when He cometh, find faith upon the earth?" I do not,



therefore, conceive that this passage even touches the question whether the human race will advance or deteriorate, whether religion will be spread universally or be extinct at Christ's coming; but another question altogether, for "faith" here means not faith generally, but with a special reference—a reference to the redress spoken of; not to the Christian religion, but to the Christian tendency to despond when things look dark; and it seems to me that the sentiment is in spirit this—that all those signal interferences which are called in Scripture "a coming of Christ" (particularly, of course, the final one), take place when all seems lost, when the most sanguine have ceased to hope. In Matthew xxiv. the same thought occurs perpetually. After enumerating the signs of dread, which seem to proclaim that all is over, *then*, He says, "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

A bleak north wind has been blowing all day, and not improving the aspect in which people and life generally appear. I read a little of a German commentary, and visited some sick people, which is all that is useful done by me to-day. How worthless and meaningless most lives are!

Bright sunshine again. Certainly the contrast between this and Ireland, in respect to light and clear skies, is very striking. The heavens seem to me, since I came, brilliant, and wake up a feeling almost of surprise nearly every hour.

To-day I read—which seems a strange feeling, after so long a cessation—German and reviews, the "Westminster" and "Fraser;" in the latter there is a historical article about Hungarian affairs, to be completed; but the present number is too general to be interesting. The "Westminster" is now, I am told, in the hands of Greg, whose talent is very great, and of Newman and that party. It is curious to read in a secular review articles on Immortality, Reason, and Faith, etc.—a striking sign of the times; for Religion must now be the question, so soon as sectarians shall have got rid of one another, like the Kilkenny cats: and, the field being clear, the real and awful questions that concern humanity shall come to be debated by men emancipated from the fear of church-excommunications, and the shivering shrieks of the sectarians who have so long monopolized to themselves the title of religious.

I have begun Lange's "Life of Christ"—a masterly, erudite, deep work, written to meet Strauss and other skeptics.

Kossuth's speeches I mean to read; there is an account of them abbreviated in the "Examiner." "Fraser's" article says that he first rose into notice in 1833, as a reporter of parliamentary debates. His energy in learning English, so as to speak in the masterly way he does, and his independence in refusing all subscriptions made for him personally, tell highly in his favor, and compel interest; but whether he is a hero or not, I think the means of ascertaining—knowing all we can know from newspapers already biased—are exceedingly slender. The "Examiner" speaks highly of him, and W. S. Landon writes enthusiastically. "The hardest thing in the world, sir, is to get possession of a fact;" so said Dr. Johnson, and that before mesmerism and homeopathy put in their claims to be fact.

#### CXVIII.

I am very hard at work in teaching, visiting, and preparation for the pulpit. My reading has been long neglected and irregular. I am trying to get a little zest, and succeeding in it—in the attempt to secure at least regularity.

A paper—one of Chambers's for the people—has just been put into my hands, on "Industrial Investments and Associations." The writer looks upon the workmen's associations as hopeless, and dispassionately endeavors to show that they conflict with irresistible laws. Nevertheless, he is desirous that

they should be tried fully and fairly, in order that the question may be set at rest. I have not yet read it, but in just glancing over it I am inclined to like the general tone—that is good in all that Chambers publishes. To-day is sunny, but dim and autumnal, with that peculiar watery shine cast on the yellowed leaves in my garden which makes them look so damp, limp, and autumnal. I have not yet been out-of-doors.

Mr. — has much more definite and settled views than his brother—a great advantage even when views are inadequate, for it saves from much uncertainty in action, much questioning *à quoi bon*, and much loss of time in speculation. In fact, I am more persuaded than I was that speculation is, to the speculator himself, at least, an evil, whatever results it may give the world; and convinced—not more than ever, for that would be impossible—that to believe is a stronger thing, a greater source of strength, as well as evidence of it—than to doubt, always, of course, excepting the cases of mesmerism and homœopathy—no, not excepting them, for they are themselves skepticisms, not faiths, shaking trust in what has been received, and which did well enough, and not substituting any certainty in its place.

## CXIX.

I spoke to H — about the worship of the Virgin, and he thought one reason for its prevalence is, that it puts before men the more affectionate side of truth; and he deplored the want of a more large appeal to the affections in Protestantism, saying that we worship Christ, but none of us love Him. I was silent, but the result of a scrutiny into my own mind was that, with an exception, I scarcely love any one, or any thing else, and that not because of any reference to His love for me, which somehow or other never enters into my mind, but solely in consequence of what He is and was, according, at least, to my conception of Him and His mind and heart. I do not know that this consciousness pleased me, because it presented itself rather as a deficiency than as a power—a lack of human sympathy, the existence of a continually increasing number of repellent poles in my constitution, which isolate me from my species, and make my antipathies more marked than my sympathies. Whereas, St. John's conception of genuine love for Him was that of an affection trained in love for beings who exhibit the same humanity which was in Him, in weaker images, in the various relationships of life. "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Through the visible as a school we rise up to the appreciation of the invisible. Now my nature forces me to reverse the order, or rather to skip the first steps, for I certainly have some sympathy—dreamy, perhaps useless—with the invisible—invisible personality, justice, right; but there they end, and almost never go on, or go back, to the visible and human. Those lines you have often quoted, of Burns—

I saw thee eye the general weal  
With boundless love—

express a feeling which I can only imagine, not realize, except by a sort of analogy which is dreamy.

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I suppose Kossuth is a man of very uncommon ability, with much that is fine, and a good deal that is human about him, but far higher in the scale of being than the scribes who now, as of old, can believe in nothing greater than themselves—it would be better if they could have a false worship with one generous emotion.

His speeches are wonderfully beautiful. There is a sincerity and fervor in them that can not be altogether from sham; he must be a hero. That *esprit moqueur* of which "The Times" is the type does the heart no good.

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I send you an extract from a letter about Kossuth, which will interest you. I have been patiently endeavoring to put myself in possession of his history, and to weigh the charges against him. I confess I incline strongly to the conviction that he is a true man, not without faults (who is?), but worthy of honor. After a century or two, liberators and heroes are received as demigods, and numbers who affect to pronounce the names of Tell, or Wallace, or Kosciusko with enthusiasm, sneer at Kossuth. Doubtless, in the worship of him there is a vast deal that is very ignorant. The mob throw up their caps, just as Shakspeare has so wonderfully described in "Coriolanus," because others shout. But by the mob I do not mean the working-classes; they have read the whole subject of the Hungarian war long before this, and have a definite opinion upon the matter; but I mean the mob of the upper classes, who shout because others shout, and fancy themselves crazy with sublime enthusiasm, when they really know nothing of Kossuth, and are staggered when a contrary opinion is given. And I mean, on the other hand, the mob who follow "The Times" newspaper. I shall write seriously\* to a friend of mine, who tells me that she is wild about Kossuth; and that, in reply to some rhapsodies of hers, her uncle has written her a letter of ridicule. Now this is really dangerous. Enthusiasm being in fashion, she writes off noble sentiments about liberty, etc., and a hue and cry against Kossuth would still it all. This is not the enthusiasm nor the affection which will bide shocks; besides, it is a most dangerous habit to character to be able to cook up raptures whenever raptures are the rage. How is a woman ever to know what she feels or what she thinks?

## CXX.

You shall have in a day or two a copy of the "Record," containing an article in which I am attacked. I find it is only one out of several which I had never heard of until yesterday. They are beginning to think me of sufficient importance to be put down, and have discovered my fellow-conspirators in Archdeacon Hare, Maurice, and Donaldson, one of the first classical scholars in England, and Tennyson. Pretty good society; and, to borrow an expression of poor Shelley, "I would rather be damned with such men than saved with the 'Record,'" at least, if the penalty of such a questionable salvation was being compelled to pollute my soul with lies and slander twice a week. But how very short-sighted to fly their blind buzzard at such small game as myself. Do they not see they bring my ministry into notice or notoriety, and give to it a prominence that it might never have gained by itself? It is like Mr. Kennaway preaching against the "Vestiges of Creation," and Polthorp's shop being besieged in consequence with purchasers of the book. Ridiculous and contemptible as the hostility of such a paper as the "Record" is, it chafes me, and deepens the feeling of defiant isolation, which is so undesirable.

## CXXI.

MY DEAR —, — Thanks many, for your letter. Do not write any more rhapsodies to your uncle about Kossuth. No enthusiasm will last long that is not deeply based—a few sarcastic sneers will shake it; for if it comes from following the enthusiasm of others, it will go with the coldness of others. As to Kossuth, the truth is we know very little about him; and it is very hard to get at facts. He is a man of unquestionable genius—unquestionably to a great extent sincere; but how far he has been a selfish man, or an ambitious man, or a rash instead of a wise man, neither you nor I can deter-

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\* *Vide* Letter CXXI.

mine, as the authentic history of the Hungarian struggle is not before us. Many of his own countrymen, equally zealous with himself for the liberty of Hungary, condemn him strongly; and I do not see how we can decide by mere feeling between them. I confess that I am not satisfied with the "all things to all men," which he has made his policy in his replies to Americans, French, Red Republicans, people of Marseilles, and English constitutionalists. I suspend my judgment because I can see a possibility of explanation; nevertheless, I am dissatisfied, and so I see is the "Examiner" of last week—a staunch friend of the Hungarian cause. We shall see what ground he takes in America. I sent an interesting account of him to your mother, from an eye-witness; but I acknowledge I put little trust in speechifying; there was one—only one trait which looks like clap-trap in that letter, where he said, "Do you applaud that? To me it seems so natural not to be ambitious." I rejoice in the enthusiasm of the working-men for him, for with them it is not a passion of three or four weeks' standing, but the result of a long-sustained interest in the Hungarian war, the details of which they read greedily while it was going on, and for which they subscribed their money. They may be wrong or right in the choice of a hero, but the enthusiasm which takes them out of themselves, and has cost them something, must do them good. I have been reading attentively such documents as I can procure respecting the Hungarian struggle and Kossuth's life. I am inclined on the whole to defend him, though by no means immaculate, and on the whole to admire him; but the less I am disposed to follow in the wake of "The Times," with its hue and cry against him, the less also do I feel inclined to follow in the wake of the mob, who cook up a nine-days' fever about him.

I do feel deep enthusiasm about Sir Charles Napier, because I have thoroughly studied his campaigns, know his motives, know how much he has sacrificed to principle, given up pensions, etc.; and at the same time see all his faults; after a due and fair balance of all which I conclude he is a right noble man; and all the sneers in the world could not shake this, nor the condemnation of the East India Company, nor the neglect of Government, nor even his own eccentricities and vehemence.

In reply to your question, "Will Kossuth stir up England to support Hungary?" I reply, with all my heart, I hope not. If once the false principle of interference by one nation in another's quarrels were admitted in Europe, why should not France aid our socialists, or America aid the miserable Irish against their landlords? Each country must free itself within itself, and the freedom which comes from foreign intervention never can be real, because it can not fit the people to use its freedom. One nation may aid another when oppressed by another; but the Hungarian question is one of their own internal constitution, and internal relations to the government. England may mediate and advise, if Austria will accept her advice; but if ever she interferes with Hungary, I think she will be guilty of a grave crime—the very same crime into which France fell when she tried, by her propagandism, to revolutionize other nations, and which England so justly resented; which, too, neutralized the French Revolution, turned its glory into shame, and ended in a final failure.

#### CXXII.

Your questions about eternity and a future state puzzle me. Time is but (to us) the succession of ideas, long or short, as they are few or many; and eternity, as we use the word, means nothing more than the endlessness of this succession. The distinction made by religious people between eternity and time is an unthinking one. Eternity seems to me a word expressive of a negation; it does but deny a termination to that mental state which we call time, for time is a subjective thing; existing, that is, in us, not external-

ly to us—a mode of our being. Do you remember that little book, “The Stars and the Earth?” It made very comprehensible how time is merely dependent upon our limitations, and how, to an unlimited being, there must be no time—how, in short, the annihilation of the sense of space would be the annihilation of the idea of time. As to what our being in a future state shall be, what its enjoyments, or whether the affections here shall be those there, and whether they shall be, as here, mutable or progressive, I confess myself utterly without a clue to decide. To my mind and heart, the most satisfactory things that have been ever said on the future state are contained in the “In Memoriam.” By-the-by, “The Times” has attacked the poem; allowed it much merit, but criticised severely. Part of the criticism is just, and part miserably small. The use of such antiquated words as “Burgeon,” “Gnarr,” may be objectionable. Be it so. Well, two words in a poem are not quite fatal to a claim of genius. The charge of irreverence is utterly false—

And dear as sacramental wine\*  
To dying lips, is all he said—

that is, on things divine.

The reviewer is very severe on this. But does human friendship convey no grace of God to the soul? Do holiest remembrances of God’s saintliest reveal nothing of God? If they do, how exquisite here the word “sacramental” is, as applied to them. Oh, most foolish Thunderer! Then he is very merry about the shadow waiting for the keys “to cloke me from my proper scorn,” talks of Hobbs and locks unpickable. Blind beetle! the shadow, death, has been identified in a previous page; the reader is in possession of the metaphor. Tennyson prays that he may be hidden in this shadow from his own scorn before he—“forgets,” I think, for I have not the passage before me. The reviewer objects to the word “cloke,” because shadows do not cloke. Nor does light clothe; but if the poor man had read “robed in light,” he would have thought it quite correct, because it is a common expression. Another—

That each who seems a separate whole  
Should move his rounds, and fusing all  
The skirts of self again, should fall,  
Remerging in the general soul.

“Of the two mysteries, the shadow with the cloke is probably the easier;” so says the reviewer, who, in this, as well as other places, evidently copies almost whole sentences from Macaulay’s castigation of Robert Montgomery; but this critic is not a Macaulay. Now to the passage. The subject is the possibility of the loss of personal consciousness in the hereafter, and of being resolved into the consciousness of the universe. Possibly the unhappy wight did not know that this is a theory largely held by foreign metaphysicians. It is quite clear that he never read the deep, wondrous Hindoo mythology, at the very root of which this conception lies. The “skirts of self” are simply the outskirts of individuality—that which marks off the conscious Entity from the All—an expression which requires thought, no doubt; but, then, the theory which he is opposing is not quite as easy as the articles of the daily newspapers, with which this gentleman is familiar; and I do not see why Mr. Tennyson is to be expected to make the statement of it intelligible at first reading to a penny-a-liner. Then comes the criticism about the whole being exaggerated, and expressed sometimes in terms of amatory fondness. Exaggeration is, of course, to be tried by the affections of a paid *littérateur* or politician!

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\* The lines have been altered, and not improved:

“And dear to me as sacred wine,” etc.—Ed.

A statist art thou in the van  
 Of public conflicts trained and bred?  
 First learn to love one living man,  
 Then mayst thou think upon the dead.

Of course it is exaggerated love to those who feel feebly. Then, as to the amatory tenderness: this, too, is ignorance of human nature; the friendship of a school-boy is as full of tenderness, and jealousy, and passionateness, as even love itself. I remember my own affection for G. R. M. How my heart beat at seeing him; how the consciousness of his listening while I was at reading or translating annihilated the presence of the master; how I fought for him; how, to rescue him at prisoners' base turned the effect of mere play into a ferocious determination, as if the captivity were real; how my blood crept cold with delight when he came to rescue me, or when he praised me. And this miserable quill-driver, in the very spirit of flunkeyism, calls this poem exaggerated, because all the poetry of the affections is made ludicrous by remembering that this Amaryllis was a barrister at the Chancery bar. If the Chancery bar, or any other accident of a man's environment, destroys the real poetry of life, then the human soul has no worth but that which comes from its trappings—an idea which I reckon about the most decisive proof of a vulgar soul which can be found. As to the tenderness, too, he is obliged to include Shakspeare in the accusation. Now it may be a very presumptuous thing to say, but it is just conceivable that Shakspeare knew as much about what is human and true, and what is the true mode of expressing it in words, as this writer.

## CXXIII.

That is a striking passage which you quote, about the Jews having believed and swindled since the days of Jacob. It shows how separable devotedness may be from morality; there being religious men who are immoral, and moral men who are unreligious, the former chiefly amongst southern temperaments, the latter amongst the northerners.

That, too, about Socrates: I am certain that most Englishmen would have hemlocked him, just as the Jews built the sepulchres of the old prophets, and in the spirit of their fathers stoned the prophets and crucified the prophet of their own day: thus allowing the deeds of their fathers.

I read Hartley Coleridge's life with pain and instruction. Something wrong in the blood, both father and son wanting will. "Coleridge," said some one of the father, "is a good man—a very good man; but, somehow, as soon as a duty presents itself in a practical way he can not do it."

On the subject of binding and loosing, I do not know how I can explain it better; but remember "loosing from sin" implies making a severance between it and the soul; "binding it," means identifying it with the character. You seem to look upon it as only relating to a forgiveness which is disrespectful of character, and so the forgiveness of man is no doubt an uncertain pledge of God's forgiveness. Now I show a *fact*: that man does actually bind and loose—does fix sin upon the character—does by his treatment take the burden off and free from it henceforth. No one can deny that fact. It may be very dreadful or very glorious, but here it is, and we can not divest ourselves of our power, we can use it or abuse it. We may, representatively, show mercy when we ought to show God's wrath, and *vice versâ*, but effects follow, whether we will or not. Of course there are counteracting circumstances mercifully interposed; otherwise, the unjust judgments of men, singly and collectively, would be in every case final, which would be hideous indeed. A man unjustly condemned and shunned may be wise and strong enough not to accept it in any sense as mirroring God's award; but to a weak and ill-informed conscience, even when innocent, it does so far

represent it as to make him an outcast, and at last degraded. "Give a dog an ill name," etc. Much more, then, does it carry this power when the guilt is real. The Church, which is Christian society, and every Christian individual, are to perceive this power instead of disclaiming it, and to use it for God, and truly, instead of untruly.

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## CHAPTER X.

1852.

Feelings and Interests of Mr. Robertson in January, 1852.—His Pleasure in Ornithology.—His Resolute Work.—Character of his Sermons.—His Humility, Gentleness.—His proud Sternness and Indignation.—Two Anecdotes in Illustration.—His Efforts in behalf of the Mechanics' Institute.—The two Lectures on the "Influence of Poetry on the Working-Classes."—Their Results upon the Working-men.—Letters of Mr. Drummond and Lord Carlisle upon the Lectures and the Replies.—Criticism by the "South Church Union."—Reply on the points, "that Severance from all Parties and Maxims is a *first* Principle in Seeking after Truth;" that "Poetry is always most cultivated in effeminate Ages."—Visit to Cheltenham.—Sermons preached at Lewes Assizes.—Addresses presented by the Young Men of his Congregation.—His Speech on the Occasion.—His Confirmation-Class.—The Elections at Brighton in 1852.—Proposition to open the Crystal Palace on Sunday.—Sermon and Letters on the Subject.—Orthodox Attacks.—Close of the Year.  
Letters from January 24, 1852, to December, 1852.

THE only record of Mr. Robertson's life and pursuits during the first month of this year is the following letter to a friend in South America:

60 Montpelier Road, Brighton, January, 1852.

\* \* \* What shall I say of your bitter loss? There is nothing to be said. God is love. All is well and all is right. These are the old, simple, primary truths; but time alone can teach you and me *how* true. Do you know Tennyson's "In Memoriam?" It is the most precious work published this century—written in memory of his friend Arthur Hallam, and exhibiting the manifold phases through which the spirit passes, of rebellion, darkness, doubt, through the awful questions about personal identity hereafter, reunion, and the uncertainty whether Love be indeed the law of the universe, on to placid trust, even cheerfulness, and the deep conviction—all is well. Tell me if you have it or have seen it. To me it has been the richest treasure I have had. For, except in this conviction, the first and simplest, on which we have ever to fall back from more artificial and complicated theories—God is, and God is love, I can see nothing in this life but a hideous, waste, howling wilderness, with siroccos and sand-pillars, overwhelming every thing, and scorching up every thing. \* \* \*

All things go on here as usual. I have been doing all I can for the working-classes, in whom I take much interest. \* \* \*

I wonder whether you could do any thing for me in assisting a study I have taken up after long disuse—that of ornithology? If you could get any one to shoot and make a collection of the Demerara birds, skinning them and filling the skins with tow or cotton, and preserving them from insects by the best means at hand, arsenical soap, corrosive sublimate, camphor or corn pepper, and packing them up carefully and dry, in tow or any such substance, it would be a great prize to me. Demerara has some beautiful birds, and some very important ones. Even the common birds would be uncom-

mon here. Skill is required in skinning them, and care. No doubt there is some one more or less expert at this in your neighborhood. Charge me with all expenses. A trifling remuneration would induce some amateur sportsman to collect the rare birds, and the common ones are easily got. Hawks, owls, ducks, among others, would be welcome, not *stuffed*, only skinned and filled lightly with cotton, etc., the brains, and so on, being removed. \* \* \* Farewell, may God bless you, comfort and strengthen you!

Affectionately and ever yours,  
FRED. W. ROBERTSON.

It is interesting to mark in this letter the reawakening of his early interest in ornithology. He had received this fresh impulse from the case of stuffed birds which Mr. Hancock, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, had sent to the Exhibition of 1851.

Mr. Hancock (he writes in March, '52) tells me that his engravings of the falcons are nearly ready for publication. I have urged him to preface them with a treatise on the art of taxidermy. If I were a man of wealth I would as readily give him £150 for his case, as I would give £4000 for a Raffaele, and rather; for his works stand alone, with nothing second to or like them.

During the brief seasons of recreation which Mr. Robertson took, he pursued, while shooting, the study of the natural history of birds. One of his letters is full of his joy at finding a rare heron, and of the anxiety which he spent on stuffing it. A friend of his, who was much with him in his expeditions, said that every bird which crossed the path furnished him materials for conversation. He pictured in the happiest manner their habits, nests, eggs, and migrations. It was impossible to help catching the enthusiasm with which he spoke of his boyish adventures in the woods. He would have loved well the adventurous career of a wandering naturalist. Wilson's wild existence among the American forests haunted him like a dream of pleasure. It is impossible not to feel more and more, as his letters unfold his character, how intolerable the cabined and monotonous life in a fashionable town, with its over-civilized race of dull pleasure-hunters, must have been to such a spirit. Yet, chafing inly at every step, he bound himself by resolute will to do his duty to the last. Self-repression—self-sacrifice—these were not mere names to him. He never relaxed his effort. Though at times a complaint of his loneliness is, as it were, dragged out of him, the complaint did not shadow behind it idleness as its cause. No pain, mental or bodily, caused him to omit the smallest portion of his work. He says, in a sermon preached the first Sunday of 1852, and it was the expression of his inmost feeling: "The motto on every Christian banner is—Forward; there is no resting in the present, no satisfaction in the past." And his sermons in this year seem to have been more sorrowful in tone, and especially more earnest. They read like those of a man who felt that death was near.



They are startling sometimes for their bold exposition of views distasteful to what is called the "Orthodox party." The opposition and impertinence he suffered from seem to have had the effect of driving him into stating, in broad and sometimes in harsh lines, his convictions. His manner became more repellent, even proud. Proud as he was, his humility was also great. Quite unaffected, it touched those who did not mistake the self-dependence of the man for self-conceit, with a sense of strange beauty, so much of the air of childhood seemed to float about it, so much receptiveness, willingness to listen, self-forgetfulness. But, when attacked unjustly, willfully misrepresented, this very humility made his indignation greater. He strove to be gentle to all men; but, to his deep regret afterwards, the haughty, soldier-spirit broke out sometimes. When the injury he resented was a personal one, he apologized frankly for his anger, if it had transgressed the bounds of Christian indignation; but when he was indignant with falsehood, injustice, or cowardly wrong done to another, it was terrible to see his whole face knit itself together with wrath; his mouth, generally soft with feeling and flexible with change, and habitually sad, grow to a fine line of concentrated force. The words he then used were startling from their power. He was never violent, never "in a passion" when he spoke, but each word fell like a sledge-hammer upon its point and on its victim. I have been told that once, when he found it necessary to denounce a man for a dastardly and willful crime, that his words had all the awfulness of a judicial sentence; that the hardened sinner writhed under them as if under a whip. To this, I think, he alludes in a letter, when he says, "Once in my life I felt a terrible might. I knew, and rejoiced to know as I spoke, that I was inflicting the sentence of a coward and a liar's hell." For his was not that maudlin Christianity which dwells on the tenderness and never on the indignation of Christ; which remembers only, "I am come to seek and save that which was lost," and forgets, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." This sternness was often shown unexpectedly. Slight acts, passing scenes, in which other men saw only folly; a word, a glance, a gesture, which others saw nothing in, he shuddered at, and spoke of indignantly. For he felt the base spirit which prompted the apparently trifling act and expression; he looked on them by the light of a pure heart, and by the experience of past history, and saw them in themselves and in their effects as Sin.

Two anecdotes sufficiently show, the first, how proudly,

and the second with what almost awful boldness, he could speak. They will also account for much of the virulence with which he was assailed. A man who answered his opponents so could scarcely expect to be gently treated in return. One Monday morning an elderly gentleman introduced himself as having been of great service to young clergymen. He arraigned the sermon he had heard in Trinity Chapel the day before; spoke of dangerous views and the impetuosity of young men; offered himself as a weekly monitor, and enumerated in conclusion the perils and inconveniences to which popular preachers were subject. Mr. Robertson, who had remained silent, at last rose. "Really, sir," he said, sternly, "the only inconvenience I have experienced in being what you are pleased to call me, a popular preacher, is intrusion like the present;" and he bowed his censor out of the room.

Another day, a lady, with whom he was slightly acquainted, assailed him for "heterodox opinions," and menaced him with the consequence which in this world and the next would follow on the course of action he was pursuing. His only answer was, "I don't care." "Do you know what don't care came to, sir?" "Yes, madam," was the grave reply, "He was crucified on Calvary."

The Working-men's Society, which in the earlier months of 1851 had been re-formed under his auspices, was necessarily weakened by its schism, and was now struggling for existence. He was incessant in his endeavors to consolidate it. In November, 1851, he says, "I have been at working-men's meetings and lectures every evening." It was suggested to him that an address on some subject of general interest would materially assist the institution. To the formal request made by the secretary, he returned the following answer:

In reply to your communication of the 21st, which I only had last night, after an absence from Brighton, I beg to say that after much consideration I have come to the conclusion that it is my duty not to refuse the request made to me.

I am very unfit at present for the excitement of addressing numbers; but knowing that the insufficiency will be pardoned, and feeling deep interest in the success of the working-men, I shall not allow this to stand in the way.

I was not aware that the name of the institution was to be changed. Is not this virtually acknowledging that the former attempt was a failure, instead of the society being, as I believe it is, the old one purified by experience? Not knowing the reasons for the change, which perhaps are valid, at first sight I am inclined to regret it. There is much in names, especially when they are associated with recollections which can be appealed to, and when they adhere to a society through many shocks and changes. Besides, "Working-man" is a noble title for any human being: a human being's right title. "Mechanic" is a poor class-title, like Agriculturist, Botanist,

Sailor, etc., etc. Besides, it is not true as a designation for your society; a schoolmaster is not a mechanic, nor a retail dealer of any kind, yet many such are in the society. Ought you not, like good soldiers in a great cause, to stand to your colors?

In pursuance of this promise, the two published lectures on "The Influence of Poetry on the Working-Classes," were given in February, 1852. They were delivered extempore, and before an audience of more than a thousand in number. The wonderful fluency, wedded to impassioned feeling, which made them so telling in delivery, did not imperil their effect when printed, for they were as full of concentrated thought as if he had elaborately written them. He himself considered that some of his statements were too concise.

The lectures, however, are not the less, but the more valuable, from their conciseness of thought. Too well known to describe, they have some autobiographical interest. Scattered through them are anecdotes of his earlier life and feeling, and short sentences such as these: "The poetic temperament is one of singular irritability of brain and nerve;" "There are three things in this world which deserve no quarter—Hypocrisy, Pharisaism, and Tyranny"—sentences which reveal the man in his constitution and his hatreds. Throughout them his rapturous delight in a military career breaks out. Nowhere is he so eloquent as in describing the glorious death of the heroes of Trukkee, the gathering of the bravest in battle round the torn colors which symbolized courage and honor, and the chivalry of war in contrast with a selfish and ignoble peace. The closing sentence, spoken in anticipation of a French invasion, is full of his own spirit. Often, with most unclerical emphasis, did he express his wish to die, sword in hand, against a French invader.

Thus much I will dare to say. If a foreign foot be planted on our sacred soil—if the ring of the rifle of the Chasseurs de Vincennes be heard upon these shores, terrible as the first reverses might be, when discipline could be met only by raw enthusiasm—thanks to gentlemen who have taught us the sublime mysteries of capital in lieu of the old English superstitions of Honor and Religion, they may yet chance to learn that British chivalry did not breathe her last at Moodkee, or Ferozeshah, or Sobraon, or Goojerat, or Meenace, or Hyderabad. They may yet be taught that there is something beyond the raw hysterics of a transient excitement in the spirit of self-sacrifice which we have learned from our Master's Cross. They may yet discover that amongst the artisans, and peasants, and working-men of England, there are a thousand thousand worthy to be brothers of those heroic eleven who sleep beneath the rocks of Trukkee, with the red thread of Honor round their wrists.

These addresses were not without result. The working-men of Brighton, for the first time told that poetry did not belong to one class alone, but to all who felt within them the

common passions of humanity, at once assumed their right. The works of many of the poets were added to their library. Their power of appreciating the highest poetry was believed in, and then they believed in it themselves. They became conscious of their powers. From the life of Christ Mr. Robertson had learned this great principle of education; to make men recognize their own spiritual capabilities by throwing himself in trust upon those capabilities. In these lectures he carried that principle into secular things. And the men *were* roused. They read the poets eagerly; sharp discussions arose among them on the comparative merits of Pope, and Walter Scott, and Tennyson. One part of the lecturer's aim was thus attained. The men employed in a dull mechanic round, or in coarse hand-labor, were led into a refined and pure region both of intellect and feeling. They desired to find and to feel the beautiful. It was a step in their elevation.

A more tangible result of the lectures was, that they brought in sufficient money to make the fortune of the Institute. They were at once published from the corrected notes of the reporter. Two letters which their author received are worth publishing, for the remark and reply which were elicited from him.

The first was from Mr. Henry Drummond :

DEAR SIR,—I have received your essay with many thanks. It appears to me that you are the only person who is grappling with the natural infidelity of minds educated in every thing except religion. \* \* \*

On sending this letter to a friend, Mr. Robertson wrote :

Mr. Drummond's letter is interesting, inasmuch as it exhibits a deeper perception of what I was aiming at than I have yet seen in any one. To produce a belief in the reality of the invisible Truth and Beauty is the chief end of my insignificant work here.

The second was from Lord Carlisle : \*

I would not thank you for your most acceptable present till I had enjoyed the pleasure of making myself acquainted with its contents. I have recognized in them all the high ability and the generous and delicate feeling which I could have expected.

Upon one or two points of mere taste we may not wholly agree, but there is no part of what you inculcate with which I agree more fully than that in which you commend universality of taste. I have some doubts, for instance, about this—"The best poetry demands study as severe as mathematics require."

I take what appears to me to be the highest of human compositions—the "Iliad" and "Macbeth"—and I think they are both eminently intelligible

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\* These letters have been already published in the preface to "Lectures and Addresses of the late F. W. Robertson."

without pain or effort. Perhaps I would give up "Hamlet" to you, not "Othello."

I think you rate Dr. Johnson's poetical powers too low.

Rest undisturbed within thy peaceful shrine,  
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine.

I must not, however, indulge in mere prattle. Let me repay your kindness in the same coin, of however inferior value. I assure you, with all truth, that I look on some things I have said with more complacency, when I flatter myself that there is some identity of view between us.

Lord Carlisle sent with his letter a copy of his "Lectures on Pope," and Mr. Robertson replied :

I will not allow a post to pass without thanking you for your kind present and kinder note, the approval of which I feel to be very invigorating. I was very glad to find that there was not a syllable of the "Lecture on Pope" which jarred with my estimate of him, which I a little feared. But the passage quoted from Warton, p. 10, and another of your own, p. 16, "'Twas not so much the pomp and prodigality of heaven," etc., express, though with far more precision, exactly the reasons which I briefly alleged for ranking Pope in the second order, but, in that order, first. I congratulated myself much on perceiving so far this agreement, and in all the admiration which the lecture contains I heartily concur.

The passage, p. 105, "Heaven was made for those who had failed in this world," struck me very forcibly several years ago, when I read it in a newspaper, and became a rich vein of thought in which I often quarried; especially when the sentence was interpreted by the Cross, which was failure, apparently.

My sentence, "The best poetry demands study as severe as mathematics require," is very justly open to criticism; but more, I think, from the unfinished abruptness of the phraseology than from its real meaning. The best poetry has a sense which is level to the apprehension at once; not being obscure in expression, nor metaphysical or scholastic in thought; but then any one who had caught this meaning at the first glance would be greatly mistaken if he supposed that he had got all, or nearly all, it meant.

The dew-drop that glitters on the end of every leaf after a shower, is beautiful even to a child; but I suppose that to a Herschel, who knows that the lightning itself sleeps within it, and understands and feels all its mysterious connections with earth, and sky, and planets, it is suggestive of a far deeper beauty: and the very instances you allege, "Macbeth" and the "Iliad," would substantiate what I meant, though not what I awkwardly perhaps seemed to say. "Macbeth," all action, swift and hurried in its progress towards *dénouement*, is intelligible at once. But I spent myself many weeks upon it, and only at last began to feel that it was simple, *because* deep. Some exquisite and fine remarks of Mrs. Jameson on certain characters in it, and profounder ones of Coleridge on others, have brought out a meaning that we feel at once was *in it*, and not forced *upon it*. In the sense I meant, I should say "Macbeth" could not be understood, especially as a whole, except with hard study.

I am very much tempted to accept the challenge of page 28, in the "Lecture on Pope,"—"I would beg any of the detractors of Pope to furnish me with another couple of lines from any author whatever, which incloses so much sublimity of meaning within such compressed limits and such precise terms."

If it were not that the cartel is addressed only to Pope's detractors, I think I should allege that wonderful couplet of the Erd Geist in "Faust:"

So schaff' ich am sausen den Webstuhl der Zeit,  
Und wirke der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid;

at least, if I might interpret them by Psalm cii. 26, 27.

In the graceful courtesy with which your lordship acknowledges that there is "some identity of view between us," I receive the best and most cheering reward that my little pamphlet has obtained.

The criticism he received was not, however, altogether friendly. He was not left without the benefit of a little honest hostility. The "South Church Union,"—the organ of the High-Church party at Brighton—gave him the benefit of its opposition. The points it attacked appear from the following letter:

I send you the "South Church Union," containing a Tractarian review of my lectures on poetry, much fairer than an Evangelical would have written, and on the whole as discriminating as could be expected from the essential difference between his position and mine: only, as was naturally to be expected, mine is only half understood and caricatured, though not intentionally. For instance, he falls foul of my "first principle," "sever yourself from all parties and maxims." Now there is a double ambiguity which belongs to such a rule. It may be a merely negative one; in which case it is only latitudinarianism, being equivalent to "it does not matter what you think, provided you are not bigoted to one opinion above another." And this is the way in which he has chosen to understand it; but in the way I said it, it became a positive rule, as indeed the context showed, "Servant only to the truth;" in other words, "Surrender yourself to no maxims, because you must be servant to something much higher, namely, truth." Doubtless the way of attaining truth is not indicated in that sentence, nor could it be; it is a second lesson—I was giving one at a time. The way of reaching truth is by obeying the truth you know. "If any man will do His will, he shall know," etc., but it was not my business to introduce that, in that connection. There is another ambiguity in an expression of which the reviewer has not failed to take the false alternative: I called it a "*first* principle." Now "*first*" may refer to time, or it may refer to importance. In reference to time the statement would be false, and in this sense in one part of his remarks he has understood it; but in reference to importance it is perfectly true.

To illustrate this: I put a loaded gun in the corner of a room, and tell my child not to touch it. There is a rule or maxim. Knowing nothing of the reason of my command, his plain duty as a child is implicit servile obedience to my order; his conscience should be grieved if, even to prevent its being broken by a fall, he is induced to touch it, because there is a harm in doing it which is to him mysterious and unknown. But suppose him older, and suppose him to understand, by natural intelligence, that the reason of my prohibition was to prevent the possibility of its exploding, and suppose him to see a sheet of paper fall from the table on fire close to it, what would his duty be—to cleave to the maxim, or to cut himself adrift from it? Surely to snatch up the forbidden gun directly. His first duty, in point of time, is to obey the rule; his first in point of importance, is to break it. Indeed, this is the very essence, according to St. Paul, of the difference between the legal and the gospel state. In the legal state we are under tutors, governors, and must not go beyond rules; for rules are disciplining us to understand the principles of themselves. But in the gospel state we are redeemed from this bondage, serving in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. We discern *principles*, and are loyal to them; we use rules or dispense with them, as they

save or destroy the principle for which they exist. We are free from the law, that is, we are free from slavish obedience to the maxims; and this not because we are in a latitudinarian way free from the principles, but exactly because we have become devoted to them in true allegiance. And so far as a man is not devoted to them he is not free from the law, but still under it, that is, he must still be restrained by maxims, for he is not fit to be trusted with the guardianship of principles. A boy who had clearly understood his father's motive about the gun, but had a secret inclination to hear it go off, would be just as unfit to dispense with the strict letter, even in the case of danger from fire, as if he was profoundly ignorant of the cause of the law's enactment.

And so in art and religion. First in point of time, submit to rules; but first in point of importance—the grand aim indeed of all rules—rise through them to the spirit and meaning of them. Write that upon the heart and be free: then you can use the maxim, not like a pedant, but like an artist—not like a Pharisee, but like a Christian.

The reviewer has made, in his zeal, another singularly wild statement, that poetry is always cultivated chiefly in those ages in which effeminacy prevails. He quotes Plato's "Republic" in profound ignorance of Plato's meaning, and infers that poetry vitiates.

Now it is an odd thing for a Tractarian to do this. What was the glorious symbolism of the Middle Ages, their majestic architecture, but poetry? Were those effeminate ages? Does *he* at all events count the age of Michael Angelo, Raphael, Fra Angelico, a feeble irreligious age? Among the Greeks, Homer, Sophocles, Æschylus, stood foremost; classical scholars do not generally select their age as the one particularly remarkable for effeminacy. Dante was something of a man, and the Italian republics were in their glory in his day. Goethe, Schiller, may be very heterodox; but the age which witnessed the wars with France was not a soft one. Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton, poor, feeble, degenerate men! and in what an age of Sybarites they were nursed to voluptuous lullabies!

The good gentleman ought to have recollected that a Coryphæus of his party has ascribed a somewhat nobler office to the poet than that of enfeebling the soul. Do you remember that fine passage in the "Christian Year,"

Sovereign masters of all arts,  
Know ye who hath set your parts?

While writing, an idea has struck me that it would be almost worth while to send the substance of what I have said here as a reply; for some principles are involved, and no personalities.

Almost immediately after the delivery of these lectures he revisited Cheltenham.

Cheltenham, February 24, 1852.

It is nearly three years (he says) since I was here, and how much is altered! Most of my once large acquaintance are gone: only a few friends remain, but they have all met me warmly. I feel myself far more changed within. How beautiful this country is, though there is yet no foliage! I was never so struck with the beauty of the surrounding hills as to-day. I saw all the old spots on hill and valley, with innumerable stories of past days annexed to them.

I was at Christ Church, my old place, this morning, and felt old associations come over me as if four and a half years had not rolled between; but the changes in the congregation told the truth. Many of the places were empty—some who had filled them gone, many dead; children came up to me as young men and young women, saying, "Don't you remember me?" and there was a visible increase in wrinkles and gray hairs. The music

nearly overpowered me, for the old hymns and tunes, and the tones of the organ, went home. \* \* \*

This afternoon, instead of going to church, I walked into the country across the fields, and through some of the neighboring villages, with my brother. The day was fresh but fine, and the Cotswold Hills, which surround Cheltenham, exhibiting a great variety of outline, and rich in woods, were in extreme beauty from the coloring. Among these hills are some of the loveliest valleys I know anywhere. The building, too, of Cheltenham is far better in style than that of Brighton—greatly varied, and almost all the detached villas in good taste, some Italian, others Elizabethan; but there is an air of lightness and grace about it which is quite different from cockneyism. This is much assisted by the abundance of trees with which the town is filled; many of the streets like boulevards; one long walk of ancient elms, a noble avenue.

During this second visit, the revival of old associations, and the inevitable comparison of the past with the present, brought with them only unmingled pain. I have thrown together below the most interesting passages referring to his stay at Cheltenham.

March 8.

I had a walk with Struan and Mr. Munro. The day was lovely in the extreme. We went over the hills, one of my favorite walks. The more I see of this place and the environs, the more I am struck with its beauty, as if I had never seen it before; yet in all probability part of the beauty of scenery depends upon your knowing all the points far and near, so that imagination assists the eye very much, and you supply what you know to what you see, fancying all the time that you see it. Ruskin, I recollect, has some good remarks on this. In our walk we came to a pretty village church-yard, Leckhampton, about a couple of miles from hence.\* I went in to get the solemn thoughts that are sure to come. There is a tomb erected to Major Macready, brother of the actor. He died in Cheltenham in 1848. It was surrounded with beautiful iron rails, and a trellis-work of iron extending above them. Around it and in it is a garden border, full of most rare and carefully tended plants: roses which bloom nowhere else, were blooming there. \* \* \*

Yesterday I rode out with Struan, Mr. Munro, and his niece, over some lovely country. We passed the scenes of many desperate leaps over walls and gates, taken by my brother and myself years ago. Munro said, "Why, Robertson, the farmers would not know you again, you ride so quietly." "I have been thinking," I replied, "several times during the ride, as I looked at a tempting wall or gate, of that line of Byron's applied to one who has spent his force, and was unmoved by Beauty: 'But now it moved him as it moves the wise.'" I took a single leap to show him that it was in me, if I chose; but all day I was, as I have been all this visit, depressed and low. To-day—this afternoon, at least—I spent in rifle-shooting with Struan, against the side of the rocks of Leckhampton Hill, making very good practice, and putting six balls in the mark out of eight. Such has been my employment—*distraction* in the French sense, and so far only, good or useful.

A merchant vessel has brought the news from the Cape that Major Wilmot, my brother's best friend, is killed. Farewell.

Here he met Tennyson, but could not pursue the acquaintance, being forced to return to Brighton. "I feel," he says,

\* Where his brother Captain Harry was buried, in May, 1864.



“as low as a schoolboy going back to a school which he dislikes. I had not time to call on Tennyson.”

On his arrival at Brighton, he proceeded to Lewes, to attend the assizes, at which he had been appointed chaplain to the sheriff. There is a graphic account, in his letters, of the trials held in the months of March and July. The sermons which he preached were, first, on St. John viii. 32—“The Kingdom of the Truth;” secondly, on St. John vii. 17—“Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge.” Both have been published. It was curious, I have been told, to watch the pew set apart for the judges—Mr. Justice Coleridge and Mr. Baron Parke. Its occupants, on the conclusion of the “afternoon service,” expecting nothing to disturb their intellect, settled themselves into decent postures, full of ease, for their customary reverie. But before three minutes of the sermon had passed by, their attention was riveted, their position changed, and they listened with evident interest to a discourse of forty minutes in length. The conclusion of the first sermon was remembered well:

In the name of Christ, I respectfully commend these thoughts, for the special consideration of the present week, to those who will be pledged by oath to witness to the whole truth they know, and nothing but the truth; to those who, permitted by the merciful spirit of English jurisprudence to watch that their clients, if condemned, shall be condemned only according to the law, are yet not justified by the spirit of the life of Christ in falsifying or obscuring facts, and who, owing a high duty to a client, owe one yet higher to the truth; and lastly, to those whom the severe intellectual and, much more, moral training of the English bar has qualified for the high office of disentangling truth from the mazes of conflicting testimony.

From the trial-hour of Christ—from the cross of the Son of God—there arises the principle, to which His life bore witness; that the first lesson of Christian life is this—be true; and the second this—be true; and the third this—be true.

In April he took the chair at a meeting in which Professor Zaba, a Pole, expounded a new system of mnemonics. He introduced this gentleman with a speech which he afterwards reduced in a condensed form to writing. It will be found in Letter CXXXII.

Shortly afterwards, perhaps the most interesting occurrence in his ministerial career took place. He narrates the occasion of it, and exposes the subjects on which he intended to speak. He sums up in a few words the principles of his teaching, and it is deeply to be regretted that an over-sensitiveness prevented him from carrying out his intention.

Tuesday, April 14.

The young men of my congregation have invited me to meet them on Tuesday evening next, on which occasion I understand they mean to present

an address expressive of gratitude for the instruction they have received from the pulpit and the platform. It is kindly meant; and I hope it may not be marred by any misunderstanding amongst themselves, or by any compromise of myself in the wording of the address, into which zeal may easily hurry them. As I am not to know the contents beforehand, I can not prepare a reply; but I am thinking of briefly reviewing some of the leading principles which I have aimed at inculcating, such as the soul of goodness in things evil—positive truth, instead of negative error—belief in the Divine character of Christ's humanity, antecedent to belief in its Divine origin—spiritual truth discerned by the soul instead of the intellect, in opposition to rationalism—truth made up of two opposite propositions, instead of a *via media* between the two. Perhaps I may take the opportunity of crushing the attacks of the "Record" on me, and its allegations of my belonging to the Kingsley school; but of this I am not quite sure. I am not likely to have such another opportunity.

The address, a portion of which is quoted below,\* was presented to him at the Town Hall, on April 21st. More than eighty signatures were appended to it, and every signature was written from the heart. The meeting was unique in Brighton. Ever since his arrival in that town, Mr. Robertson had given much time and thought to the elevation of the young men of his congregation, especially those belonging to the class of clerks, assistants in shops, servants, and others. Gradually his influence over them became permanent. We have seen by his conduct at the meeting of the Early Closing Association, that he did not purchase that influence by flattering their views, or joining in their popular clamor. His sincerity of purpose at that meeting, which at first had partially repelled them, afterwards attracted them. They felt sure of him. They knew that they were loved not too well, but wisely. And Christianity became dear to them through him. They saw before their eyes continually how manly and noble a Christian life might be. Nor did he cease to urge this life upon them. "With all the earnestness he possessed," said one of them, "and how great that was! he exhorted us to begin in our youth to say with David, O God! thou art *my* God! early will I seek Thee." Many of his ser-

\* "We desire to express to you the high and affectionate esteem in which your name is and has long been held among us, and also to render you sensible of our gratitude for the advantages we have derived from your labors both in and out of the pulpit.

"There is entertained among us a strong feeling of obligation for the exalted views of all that is highest and holiest in religion with which you have familiarized our minds, for the elevated standard of morality to which you have taught us to conform our lives, and no less for those lessons of philosophy and secular wisdom which it has been so often our privilege to learn from your lips.

"We would also assure you, honored sir, of our due appreciation of your ready sympathy with the cause of the young men in this town, your undeviating courtesy and kindness in conforming to their wishes and requirements, and your cordial exertions to promote their welfare.

"Permit us, in conclusion, respectfully, but most sincerely, to express a hope that we may long continue to enjoy the advantages of your residence amongst us, and that unflinching health and domestic happiness, o'ershadowed by no cloud or sorrow, may enable you with entire satisfaction to pursue the studies and fulfill the duties incident to that exalted calling to which you are devoted."

mons were especially addressed to them. It was easy to excite and interest them, but he was not content with that. He urged them to discredit feeling unless it passed into and was aroused by action for Christ. The novelty of his views, and the youthfulness of his character, were calculated to make young men adopt him as a leader. But he would not have them rest on him; he warned them that if they would be spiritually strong, they must learn how to stand alone with God and their own soul. He refused to claim dominion over their faith. "One was their Master," he said, "even Christ." Thus he endeavored to guide them into Christian manhood; and he succeeded. He had the rare pleasure of seeing the trees he had planted bearing matured and goodly fruit.

He answered the address in a few words. As he spoke, all rose, full of sincere emotion, and bound by the unity of that emotion into one body, in which the different ranks, the different opinions, and the various interests which in common life made them jar with one another—were forgotten. They were all fused together by the fire of a common love. He himself was deeply moved. He said in words which were never forgotten, and which drew forth enthusiastic and heartfelt cheers:

We are not here to bandy compliments with one another; you have not come to flatter me, and I have not come with any affected coyness, to pretend to disclaim your flattery, in order that it may be repeated. You have told me in the frank spirit of an Englishman that my ministry has done you good. Frankly, as an Englishman, I tell you with all my heart I do believe it. I know that there are men who once wandered in darkness and doubt, and could find no light, who have now found an anchor and a rock and a resting-place. I know that there are men who were feeling bitterly and angrily what seemed to them the unfair differences of society, who now regard them in a gentle, more humble, and more tender spirit. I know that there are rich who have been led to feel more generously towards the poor. I know that there are poor who have been taught to feel more truly and more fairly towards the rich. I believe—for on such a point *God can only know*—that there are men who have been induced to place before themselves a higher standard, and perhaps, I may venture to add, have conformed their lives more truly to that standard. I dare not hide my belief in this. I am deeply grateful in being able to say that, if my ministry were to close to-morrow, it would not have been, in this town at least, altogether a failure.

He concluded with a sentence, which was the only answer he deigned to give to the taunts which had been levelled against him for his interest in young men, and in the subjects, both theological and social, which then engrossed them:

"Let the words of that young man" (Mr. C. Evans, who

had presented the address) "answer for it, whether there is Rationalism or Socialism in my teaching."

Yet in this, the most triumphant moment apparently of his ministry, he was at heart profoundly sad and wearied, partly from the loneliness of his life, and partly, as he hints himself in the following letter, from physical exhaustion and disease. It is sorrowful and strange to think how little men knew what lay beneath that quiet and resolute exterior :

Wednesday, April 21.

The meeting of last night passed off as heavily as it was possible to conceive. One of the young men rose and presented the address with a warm and cordial speech, to which I replied. The best thing of the evening was a very short speech in three sentences from one of the young men, who said he had been to the Great Exhibition, and had received from it a comment upon the doctrine which lay at the bottom of Mr. Robertson's teaching—not to call any thing common or unclean. It showed a finer and more masterly appreciation of what I aim at than I had expected. I returned thanks; but certain things which had been said had so damped all power of enjoying, that I left unsaid all I had meant to say, and confined myself to mere thanks. I had intended to state the principles of my teaching, such as the establishment of truth, instead of the negative destruction of error—suggestive teaching, instead of dogmatic—working from within outward instead of the converse, etc.

I send you a "Guardian" with the account. It has somewhat mangled what I said, by putting in pithless and unmeaning words and epithets, as well as by altering and inserting sentences; but, on the whole, except the last sentence, it is tolerably correct. I wish I could describe the dreary feelings of yesterday evening. Eighty persons were present to do me honor, and express kindly feelings to me; the applause was enthusiastic, yet all seemed weary, stale, flat, unprofitable. In the midst of the homage of a crowd, I felt alone, and as if friendless.

The first sheet of this letter was written in a very gloomy mood—the result partly of the excitement of the preceding evening, and the preaching and speaking of the last two days. It still remains. I think it only just to myself to ask you to read this sheet first, as I can not judge at all whether I am seeing fairly or through a distorted medium—whether I am myself, or in an unnatural mood. Do not, therefore, read what I have written without this allowance.

Mr. J—— Y—— and Mr. B——, whom I knew in Heidelberg, are coming to take tea with me this evening, so I shall forget my low spirits and myself, and perhaps see things more justly; at least whenever I feel strongly, I make it a rule now to assume the probability that physical causes have something to do with the matter.

The depression which he mentions in the above letter, and the almost passionate sadness which appears in his correspondence, have given rise to many suggestions on the part of Mr. Robertson's theological opponents, that his change of views did not give him peace of mind. The *Christian* charity of the "Record" has gone a step farther, and stated, either in its own criticism or through correspondents, that Robertson's later opinions arose either from a diseased brain

or from a self-conceit which urged him to seek a popular reputation by the advocacy of "strange doctrines."

The ensuing letters reply to these accusations. They show that his views did not conduce to his popularity, but to the contrary. They show that his opinions were not rashly formed, but grew slowly out of a clear, thoughtful, and conscientious development of his spiritual being. They forbid any one to assert that there was the slightest hesitation in his convictions. They exhibit him as believing with all his heart that he was right, and as finding in his opinions the explanation of God's work on men, and of God's dealing with his own life.

Of all the crimes with which a clergyman can be charged, the worst is the crime of seeking for popularity at the expense of spiritual honesty. Of this crime the "Record" has accused a man who, if he was any thing, was truthful. It is not needful to make any serious attempt to disprove this calumny. It is only needful to say plainly that it is a falsehood, and to leave to the judgment of the public the character of the "Record" and the character of Mr. Robertson.

Brighton, December 7, 1852.

MY DEAR —, — \* \* \* I would not exchange the light I have for the twilight I have left, for all that this earth can give. Some ask whether I have more peace. In men I sympathize less—infinity less; in God, all. I shall be left alone, as my Master was. I am hated by some who loved me once—not for what I do, but for what I think. I have long foreseen it. And knowing that the Father is with me, *I am not afraid to be alone*, though to a man surely not ungenerally made there is some sharpness in the thought.

With respect to vacillations in views, I can say, simply and decidedly, there have been none. Clearer, brighter light every day, and more assurance what truth is and whom I serve, I walk not in doubt, but in the light of noonday certainty.

My own personal experience strangely capacitates me to understand the feelings of the Saviour more and more, even to each separate sentence. As, for instance, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?"

I have not tried to form any party in this town. I have avoided even the attempt to attach individuals to myself. I humbly thank God that no one can accuse me of proselytism. I have not even met half way those who seemed inclined to receive the truth I taught. I have left the truth in its own majesty, to be received or rejected. And every day makes me rejoice that I have sternly adhered to this rule. For I find the timid shrink, and those that were warm grow cold; and I am at least saved from the pang that He suffered, in losing those to whom He had given personal and individual affection. Yet, in a few instances, not even from this. \* \* \*

Brighton, December 9, 1852.

MY DEAR —, — \* \* \* I have tried in my ministry to exalt the spirit above the letter, to show the liberty of the children of God, their emancipation from the law by love, the abrogation of the law to such as love, the Spirit of the cross, the Divine majesty of Christ. My aim has been to show the deep

truth which lies at the root of the popular formulas, to tell people how much more true they are than they themselves know, which was exactly what our Lord did in reference to the law, and which is always a dangerous enterprise, because, if people miss the old cant words of which *they* did not feel the meaning, they fear that the meaning is gone.

I could not tell you too strongly my own deep and deepening conviction that the truths which I teach are true. Every year they shed fresh light on one another, and seem to stretch into immensity. They explain to me life, God, and the Bible; and I am certain that what fresh light I shall receive will be an expansion and not a contradiction of what I have. As for the words in which I try to make others see what I see, they indeed are poor and bewildered enough. But there is no bewilderment in my mind, though much that is incomplete. The principles are rooted in human nature, God, and the being of things, and I find them at the root of every page in Scripture. The *principles* can not be reversed. My mind has grown by a regular development year by year, and I could as easily say that I doubt my own existence as doubt those truths which have grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. They are not opinions nor theories, but convictions; part of my being, of my habits of thought and life, coloring every thing, "the fountain light of all my day, the master light of all my seeing." These are the truths for which men go to the stake, and relinquish, joyfully, friends, sympathy, good name, worldly prospects. They do not depend upon the accuracy of an intellectual process, but upon the verdict of all the highest powers of soul. For instance, I would not give up a single thing on the certainty that St. Paul did not write the Epistle to the Hebrews. These are matters of intellectual investigation, and I am not sure that I am right, because I am neither certain that all the evidence is before me, nor that I have rightly judged from the evidence. But if I am asked to surrender *convictions*, I can not do it for any reward, nor for fear of any loss; these depend upon all I know of God; they are the things seen in the noonday light of my soul; and I can not pretend to submit my judgment in such things to wiser men or better men. It would be mock humility. I might just as readily, at their bidding, say that green is scarlet. It may be so; but if it be, my whole vision is deranged by which I have walked and lived, and by which this world is beautiful. To say that I am ready for any martyrdom in the defense of my *convictions*, and that I can not affect to have doubts or misgivings about them, is only to say that they *are* convictions.

I write all this for your sake. Be sure I would never teach with the sharp angular distinctness of assertion that I do what were to me only peradventures. Believe me, with all the sympathy of one to whom your spiritual guidance is partly given.

During the months of May and June he prepared his class of young persons for confirmation. The labor which every year he bestowed upon this work was great. He personally interested himself in all the candidates, whether they were bright or dull in intellect. Indeed, the heavier the clay, the more pains did he take in his tillage. He endeavored to make himself master of the peculiarities of character belonging to each of his class, and of the drift of their lives, that he might adapt to these his teaching. While brimming over with images and apt illustrations calculated to attract youth and to fix the truths he spoke of in the memory, that teach-

ing was laid on so solid a basis of learning, and supported by such original thinking, that the most advanced scholar could listen to it with satisfied pleasure.

Nor was this teaching formal: lectures repeated each year without variation. It is true it did not alter from year to year in the main subjects, or in their order, but in form and in illustrations it changed continually. It laid all the events of the day under contribution. The form it had was worn as loosely as possible, and never hindered him from expansion. Often, inspired by a question from his class, he would leave his regular course, and speak on the difficulty proposed, or the shade of feeling suggested, for more than half an hour, without pausing a moment, and that with a logical sequence—a grasp, an eloquence, and a fire of imagination which were the same, whether he discussed a point of theology, a shade of criticism, or a subtle winding in the labyrinth of the heart. No one could listen without being stirred, excited, and feeling a higher life possible. He knew that he produced this effect, and hence arose his constant warnings against a religion of transient enthusiasm, always embodied the Sunday before the Confirmation in such sermons as “The Parable of the Sower,” “Jacob’s Wrestling.”

This year the preparation of the candidates exhausted him greatly.

I am undergoing the reaction (he writes) consequent upon strained anxieties and attention. When all was over yesterday at the Confirmation, I felt as if I had no work to turn to, and it was with extreme repugnance and aversion that I contemplated preparation for Sunday. It reminds me of the “Song of the Shirt”—“Work, work, work;” and the perpetual treadmill necessity of being forever ready twice a week with earnest thoughts on solemn subjects is a task which is quite enough to break down all originality, and convert a race-horse into a dray.

Fortunately for his health, an outward interest now broke in upon his life. The elections for Brighton came on in July, and they interested him as much as if he had been a violent political partisan. But it was in reality the quicker life of the town and the public excitement which delighted him, and took him for the time out of his restricted sphere of action. The struggle, the play of human passions, the battle, in which he wished to see only the contest and not the rascality, roused in him all the combative enthusiasm of his warrior nature. He was seen everywhere—his blue eyes flashing, his brown hair thrown back from his forehead, his walk rapid, his words quick and stirring. “I have read and done nothing all this week,” he writes, “the excitement about the election has been so great.” In accordance with

his usual practice of bringing the events of daily life under the influence of the pulpit, he preached a sermon on the duties of electors. He took as his subject the election of Matthias in the room of Judas. A short quotation will best show the spirit in which he fulfilled his task :

Delicate and difficult as the introduction of such a subject from the pulpit must be, yet it seems to me the imperative duty of a minister of Christ—from which he can not, except in cowardice, shrink—to endeavor to make clear the great Christian landmarks which belong to such an occurrence. But let me be understood. His duty is not to introduce politics in the common sense of the word, meaning thereby the views of some particular party. The pulpit is not to be degraded into the engine of a faction. Far, far above such questions, it ought to preserve the dignity of a voice which speaks for eternity, and not for time. If possible, not one word should drop by which a minister's own political leanings can be discovered.

Yet there must be broad principles of right and wrong in such a transaction, as in any other. And in discharge of my duty I desire to place those before you.

In this sermon he steadily kept out of sight his own political views. He only declared the great principles according to which a vote should be given. Beyond the pulpit his influence was not unimportant, and he did not hesitate to exert it fairly in behalf of the liberal candidates, Sir George Pechell and Mr. Trelawney. He was the only Church of England clergyman who voted for these gentlemen; and owing to all the rest of his brethren supporting the other side, and to some reports industriously circulated concerning Mr. Trelawney's opinions, it was a courageous vote. It enlisted against him the conservative and the "religious" militia of Brighton. The letter which follows refers to these events, and his share in them :

July 10.

The election is over. Lord Alfred Hervey was elected with a majority of about two hundred and fifty over Trelawney, who, however, polled nearly twelve hundred votes (I write from vague memory). I suppose people will be shocked at my vote, even those who voted for Pechell, though there is no difference between his politics and Trelawney's. A stranger, quite a gentleman in appearance, held up his hands on being told it, and said, "Why, Trelawney is an atheist." "Do you know that for a fact?" said I. "No, but I was told so." "Then I must say that, as it is a very solemn charge, you ought to inquire before you assert it." Five minutes after, a lady met me, and said, "Why, Mr. Trelawney is a Catholic." So, after thorough investigation, I wrote a note to this gentleman, and told him Trelawney was neither an atheist nor a Catholic, but a member of the Church of England—a man, as I was credibly informed by Mr. Seymour, of high character. I concluded with the suggestion that it was due to his honor to contradict his own statement wherever it had been made.

I omitted to tell you the surprise at the polling-booth at my vote was quite amusing. I saw by the countenances of the bystanders that it excited much interest to know which way it would be given. There was quite a breathless attention while the name, address, etc., were being taken down; and when



I said, "Pechell and Trelawney," voices cried on all sides, "Thank you, sir!" "Bravo!" "Well done, indeed; that's a man!" and the respect was extreme. I could not help fancying, from the tone of the remarks, that they appreciated the difficulty of a clergyman in voting on that side. What struck me most was, there were no uproarious cheers, but an evidently respectful and grateful acceptance of the act and its motives. \* \* \*

On his return from his usual absence during October, he found Brighton boiling over with excitement on the Sabbath question. It had been proposed to open the Crystal Palace on Sundays. It was at once inferred that Christianity was in mortal danger, and to protect it from its death-wound, the whole religious phalanx of Brighton rallied round its standard. Large talking assemblies met together, and the wildest and most unfounded assertions were made. The "Times" was accused of the grossest venality, because it defended the throwing open of the Palace; but the accuser, a clergyman, was obliged to eat his words. Mr. Robertson alone stood against the torrent in behalf of Christian liberty. He did not, for several reasons, approve of the opening of the Palace on Sunday; but he did refuse to adopt arguments against it based on the supposition of the non-abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath. He preached a sermon, "The Sydenham Palace, and the Religious Non-observance of the Sabbath," on the whole subject, in which he declared that he had satisfied himself.

November 16, 1852.

MY DEAR TOWER,—As you will be here next week, I will not write you a volume, for nothing else would do. I preached on the subject on Sunday, satisfactorily to myself at least—a thing which has occurred to me but once or twice in all my ministry; so I am thoroughly prepared with an opinion on a matter I have well considered. I will say at present I am quite resolved to sign no petition. Dr. V.'s pamphlet does not go to the root of the matter. I agree with him in viewing the move, so far as it is an *avowed* innovation, with great jealousy; but I can not ask for a state enactment to reimpose a law which Christianity has repealed, without yielding the very principle of Christianity. Historically, the Lord's Day was not a transference of the Jewish Sabbath at all from one day to another. St. Paul, in Rom. xvi. 5, 6, speaks of a *religious non-observance* of the Sabbath; I can not say or think that the Crystal Palace affair is a *religious non-observance*, believing it to be merely a lucrative speculation: nevertheless, I have nothing to do with that. The Sabbath is abrogated, and the observance of a day of rest is only a most wise human law now, not to be enforced by *penalties*. Besides, how dare we refuse a public concession to the poor man of a right of recreation which has been long assumed by the rich man with no protest or outcry from the clergy, who seem touched to the quick only when desecration, as they call it, is noisy and vulgar.

Mr. Tower suggested, in answer, Bishop Horsley's critical treatment of the question, and to this letter he replied:

"Horsley's Sermons" I only vaguely remember. I am quite at ease on

the subject. The critical disposal of this or that text would not alter my views. I am certain of the genius and spirit of Christianity; certain of St. Paul's *root thoughts*—far more certain than I can be of the correctness or incorrectness of any isolated interpretation: and I must reverse all my conceptions of Christianity—which is the mind of Christ—before I can believe the Evangelico-Judaic theory; which is that Mr. — may, without infringement of the Fourth Commandment, drive his carriage to church twice every Sunday, but a poor man may not drive his cart; that the two or three hours spent in the evening by a noble lord over venison, champagne, dessert, and coffee, are no desecration of the command; but the same number spent by an artisan over cheese and beer in a tea-garden will bring down God's judgment on the land. It is worse than absurd. It is the very spirit of that Pharisaism which our Lord rebuked so sternly. And then men get up on platforms as — did: and quietly assume that they are the religious, and that all who disagree, whether writers in the "Times," Sir R. Peel, or the "sad exceptions," of whom I was one, to which he alluded, are either neologians or hired writers! Better break a thousand Sabbaths than lie and slander thus! But the Sabbath of the Christian is the consecration of all time to God: of which the Jewish Sabbath was but the type and shadow. See Col. ii. 16, 17. Bishop Horsley's attempt to get over that verse is miserable, I remember.

"Six hundred churches wanted." Yes! but when shall we have different hours for service and different congregations in one church, say one for three congregations: and so save two-thirds of the money spent on stone and brick, that it may be spent on the truer temple, human beings, in whom God's Spirit dwells? They do this on the Continent, and with no inconvenience. Besides, the inconvenience and mutual giving way would be all so much gain for Christian life, instead of an objection to the plan.

A member of his congregation wrote to him on this subject. He replied:

60 Montpelier Road, November 17.

MY DEAR MR. WRIGHT,—I am very sorry indeed that I should have left my meaning ambiguous on Sunday. I will briefly recapitulate what I said, or meant to say.

I tried to show that in St. Paul's judgment the Sabbath is abrogated, being, as he calls it (Col. ii. 16, 17), a shadow of which Christ is the substance. This Sabbath has given way to a larger, grander, more spiritual Sabbath—the Rest of the people of God—a life claimed, not in parts, but as a whole, for Him—a perpetual sacrifice.

To urge this abrogated Sabbath again on men's consciences as indispensable to salvation, St. Paul reckons as a giving up of the spirit of Christianity (Gal. iv. 10, 11). Nevertheless, it is perfectly competent for the Christian Church to appoint days and times, as she shall find them needful, to aid her infirmities or express her love, provided only that she does not bind them on human consciences as indispensable.

Such a day, among others, she did appoint in very early times—the Lord's day. But it was not a transference of the Jewish Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, but arose out of the great Christian principle, which views all life in reference to the Church's crucified and risen Lord. And thus time was divided into cycles, larger and smaller, the cycle of the week or the cycle of the year, each representing the death in which all daily die—the resurrection in which all daily rise. Friday and Saturday, Good Friday and Easter day were the epochs respectively of these cycles.

I hold this institution of the Lord's day to be a most precious and blessed one, not to be dispensed with except with danger; and I believe that no one who loves his country can look on any measure which is likely to desecrate

its observance, or break through our English feelings towards it, without great misgiving and apprehension.

And St. Paul modifies his broad view of a repealed Sabbath, by acknowledging that there may be a religious and conscientious observance of that day. "One man esteemeth one day above another. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. \* \* \* He that observeth the day observeth it to the Lord." On the other hand, he modifies it again, by emphatically requiring that the *non-observance* of the Sabbath must be a religious non-observance—a conscientious, and not merely a licentious or latitudinarian one. He that observeth not the day, *to the Lord* he observeth it not.

Now here is my first objection to the spirit in which the Crystal Palace is proposed. It contemplates a non-observance of the Sabbath, but not a religious one. It is not non-observance to the Lord. It does not proceed from a sublime view of Christian life as one great Sabbath, but from laxity, indifference, and love of lucre. At least, I fear so, for it is put forward in the light of a speculation.

My second objection—not so much to the thing itself as to the grounds on which it is advocated—is the assumption, that to humanize the people is identical with Christianizing them. I am very anxious to humanize and polish the people; but I can not shut my eyes to the lesson of history—that the arts, such as painting, sculpture, music, poetry, have not in themselves ennobled, but often deteriorated nations. The worship of the Beautiful is not the worship of Holiness; and therefore to talk of statue galleries and museums, as if they were to do the work which can only be done by the Cross of Christ, and to represent such æsthetic amusements as the true and right *religious* use of rest, I hold to be mere false sentimentality.

But with all this I am strongly opposed to every endeavor to put down the Crystal Palace by petition or legislative enactments, on the three following grounds, which I meant to distinctly name in my sermon:

1. Because it is a return to Judaism to enforce, by human enactment, that which St. Paul declares repealed. I may much regret the probable tendencies of this measure; but still I can not try to forbid by law a sort of recreation for the poor man in public gardens and public picture galleries, which the rich man has freely allowed himself in private gardens, and galleries, with no protest whatever from the clergy.

2. Because a severe and stringent law injures the conscience. Whoever multiplies enactments beyond what is essential, tempts human consciences to transgression. For it *is* transgression when a man does a thing which he thinks wrong, even though it be not abstractedly wrong. Hence St. Peter speaks against "putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither he nor his fathers had been able to bear." And hence St. Paul speaks of the "motions of sin which were by the law;" that is, caused and stirred into motion by the law. I am persuaded that much abandonment is caused by the strict severity of Sabbath observance, when others, who are not fit for it, are compelled to obey, at the risk of being treated as infidels. Many a criminal on the scaffold can trace his first declension in crime to such a restriction, and the feeling of hopelessness and defiance which seized him when he had once broken it.

And I refuse to sign such a petition, lastly, because to exalt a "law positive"—that is, a law contrived for temporary and special ends—into the ranks of a moral law externally binding, has always been the first step towards relaxing the reverence for that which is moral. Thus the Pharisees were very scrupulous about titling mint, anise, and cumin: justice, judgment, and truth they cared little for. They were furious at a transgression of the Fourth Commandment, but they would allow a man to be as proud, and selfish, and tyrannical as he pleased. And so, in the same way, there is a tendency now

to be very indignant about a poor man's spending Sunday afternoon in a tea-garden, whilst there is little zeal against the real damning sins of social life. Why do they not preach a crusade against noblemen driving in the park? Or why do they speak of God sending a judgment on this nation for a Crystal Palace, while they quietly ignore the fact, or are too polite to take notice of it, that four-fifths of our male population are living in a state of concubinage till they are married? Why do they hold up hands of pious indignation when a train runs by, while more than one religious person in this town drives regularly to church on fine days as well as wet? Why do they say that it is a crime to sacrifice a single policeman to the comfort of the community, by making him work on the Sabbath, when their own servants are "sacrificed"—if it be sacrifice—in making their beds, cleaning their rooms, boiling their luxurious hot potatoes, etc., etc., etc., none of which are either works of necessity or works of mercy—the only works, they say, which are excepted from the rule? Why do they not grapple with the slander, and the gossip, and the pride of society, and the crimes of the upper classes? Why are they touched to the quick only when desecration of the Sabbath puts on a *vulgar* form? Because, as I said before, scrupulosity about laws "positive" generally slides into laxity about the eternal laws of right and wrong.

For all these reasons, I am against the petition movement, and strongly against it. Besides, though I look jealously and suspiciously at the Crystal Palace plan, I am not yet certain that it may not be an improvement on the way in which the poorer classes at present spend their Sundays. I hope this is clear, my dear Mr. Wright. I have written it rapidly, having much to do, and concisely; but I trust it will be clear. You are quite welcome to show it to any one who thought my sermon ambiguous.

Of course, refusing to sign the petition for an enactment against the opening of the Palace on Sunday, he was openly and covertly attacked. One of his brother ministers alluded to him in a public manner as the "sad exception" to the Christian unanimity of the clergymen of Brighton. And yet he was more particular in his observance of that day than many of his censurers. He has often walked ten miles and more to preach on a Sunday, rather than accept a carriage or take a fly, and this lest he should cause his brother to offend. But alas! what matters that, as long as men act and speak as if they held that true religion consists in holding orthodox views, and not in doing right actions? "This man could not be of God, because he did not keep the Sabbath day!"

In the midst of all this outward rebuke, and in spite of the increased loneliness of his position, his spirit seems to have been growing humbler, calmer, and more gentle. The following words may well close the history of his life in this year:

The life of Christ and His death, after all, are the only true solution of the mystery of human life; to that, after all, all the discords of this world's wild music must be attuned at last. There is a sharp pain—past pain—in that letter which you sent me, but yet how instinctively one feels at once that the tone of Christianity is wanting. I do not mean the cant expressions, but the genuine tone which numbers of real men and women have learned by heart.

It may be hereafter mellowed into this, as I hope my tone will; but neither are as yet, though I have got what your correspondent has not, the words of the song; only I have not the music. And what are the words without? Yet it is something to feel the deep, deep conviction, which has never failed me in the darkest moods, that Christ had the key to the mysteries of Life, and that they are not insoluble; also, that the spirit of the Cross is the condition which will put any one in possession of the same key: "Take my yoke upon you, and ye shall find rest for your souls." It is something, much to know this, for, knowing it, I feel it to be unphilosophical and foolish to quarrel with my lot, for my wisdom is to transmute my lot by meekness into gold. With God I can not quarrel, for I recognize the beauty and justice of His conditions. It is a grand comfort to feel that God is right, whatever and whoever else may be wrong. I feel St. Paul's words, "Let God be true, and every man a liar."

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*Letters from January, 1852, to December, 1852.*

## CXXIV.

MY DEAR —, —If I do not reply at once, I may possibly never reply at all, so much has the habit of procrastination or the *à quoi bon* question taken possession of me. Secondly, if I do not reply at once, I may in honesty, after reading your heterodoxy, be compelled to administer castigation. And, thirdly, a slight *épanchement de cœur* says, "I shall not last long in your bosom, cold sir, so write to your friend while the fit is on you."

Well I am no heretic in my affections either, and my friendship is as truly yours as ever, my dear —. As warmly? Hum—why *all* was warm and effervescing once, now all is cold and flat. If a mouse could change into a frog, or a falcon into a penguin, would the affections be as *warm* as before, albeit they might remain unalterable? I trow not, so I only say you have as much as a cold-blooded animal can give, whose pulsations are something like one per minute.

I can not agree with you in wishing for a war. It is very horrible, and though I think there is nothing of personal danger in it that appalls, the thought of what would befall our *women* gives me many a sleepless night. I expect an invasion; nevertheless, I detest war. But Mr. Cobden and Co.'s doctrines prostitute national honor to the "wealth of nations," and have left us unable to defend ourselves, or even to arm our soldiers as well as savages can afford to arm themselves.

## CXXV.

I do not remember exactly what I said on E—V—'s birthday about God's designs. A conversation grows out of warm striking of mind on mind, and it is almost impossible to reproduce it. At this moment it has entirely gone from me as if it had never been. I can only conjecture that I said something to the effect that God's plan was not thwarted by transgression and a new plan begun; as in a siege, the plan of the invader is frustrated by a sap meeting him, and then a counter-sap and fresh mines carried on below to foil that; but that God's *idea* of Humanity is, and ever was, Humanity as it is in Jesus Christ; that so far as it fails of that, His idea may be *said* to have not been realized; but we must be cautious of first using this language to express rudely our mode of conceiving a truth, and then arguing from it, as if it were real, and not merely a human mode of thought. The idea of a tree or plant—say the vine—is of the tree in its perfection. In the English

climate you may say it has failed, that is, it has not attained the stature which of right belongs to the plant; it is a fallen, abortive thing; but you do not mean by that, that its Creator intended that particular plant to succeed, and was disappointed in the attempt. Fallen, man is, in comparison of the Divine idea of Humanity, but it was no failure. However, it is impossible to write out in cold blood, unstimulated by something naturally going before, on such a subject. It becomes a mere dry essay.

## CXXVI.

Lewes, Friday, 7 45 P.M.

From Tuesday until this moment I have scarcely had an instant. We are in court by nine, and directly it is over I dine either with the judges or the high-sheriff. We are at this moment out, after eleven hours' sitting. A horrible murder has occupied them all day, which is not over yet. We begin to-morrow at eight A.M. I shall write to you shortly, with an account of the last few days. I am thoroughly and completely tired.

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I write during an interval of a most painful character—during the trial of an unhappy woman for the murder of her husband. She is at this moment in a swoon. The judge has stopped the case until her recovery. I am sitting close to him, and his observations to me from time to time seem to show that there is not the slightest chance of her escape. It is a horrible case. She poisoned him in order to marry a young man, or boy, who has just given evidence against her in a disgraceful way. His only excuse is, that she had already tried to throw the murder upon him, and I believe he had a hand in it; so, too, Baron Parke has just told me he thinks. The last witness is now giving his evidence; and when the counsel for the defense has spoken, and the judge has given his charge, I imagine the jury can not doubt ten minutes about their verdict—that being “*guilty*,” her fate is sealed. No, I am wrong, her own child is just called to witness against her—a poor little boy seven years old. The poor miserable creature herself, during the trial, which lasted all yesterday, and for the hour which it has continued this morning, has been almost in a swooning state. A quarter of an hour ago Dr. Taylor, the celebrated analyst, descended into the dock, and prescribed for her, the court meanwhile waiting several minutes in dead silence for her recovery. Dr. Taylor gave most interesting medical evidence yesterday, respecting the chemical analysis by which he discovered the presence of arsenic in large quantities in the deceased. The judge said to me, as he took the book, “Now you will hear some evidence worth listening to.”

I am thankful to say the little boy has not been permitted to give evidence; he knew nothing about an oath. Nothing could have been more horrible than an only child taking his own mother's life away.

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I could write no more yesterday: the trial became too intensely interesting and painful to do any thing. The judge's charge lasted, I should think, an hour and a half. The jury retired. An hour and a half passed in terrible suspense. At last they came: the foreman said at once, “**GUILTY.**” Baron Parke put on the black cap. The poor woman, with burning cheeks and eyes as brilliant as fire with excitement, was held up between two turnkeys to receive her sentence. “My lord,” said the clerk of arraigns, “you have omitted two essential words; you did not say what death she is to die.” So the fainting thing was held up again, and the last sentence of the award repeated, with the words “hanged by the neck.” I felt as if I were a guilty man in sitting by to see a woman murdered. But my eye caught the figure of the scoundrel Hickman, standing by to hear her who was suffering all for him condemned to die, without the slightest appearance of emotion. It was

a most sickening spectacle from first to last; and there is not the smallest chance of her life being spared.

My sermon was delivered badly and hurriedly. On Friday and Saturday the sheriff was away, and I did his duty for him of escorting the judges. Every time I returned to my lodgings alone in the carriage-and-four I was not a little amused by the blast of trumpets which saluted me the moment I put my foot upon the carriage steps, and the mute awe of the crowd, who were imposed upon by my robes with the idea of something very grand. I felt half inclined to bid the row of javelinmen who uncovered in a line as I passed, and the trumpeters, have done with the solemn absurdity, at least in my case: but I reflected that forms and pageants are of far deeper importance for the masses than at first sight appears. A judge in black robes, instead of scarlet, would not be half a judge. Many reflections of this kind occurred to my mind, some of which I put into my afternoon sermon; in the morning I was too hoarse and unwell to preach.

## CXXVII.

March 26.

That miserable murderess, it is said, has confessed her crime, and exonerated Hickman entirely; but the truth of this latter portion of her story I rather doubt. Hanging a woman is a hideous thought. The impressions of last week will, I think, reverse forever all my intellectual convictions of the need and obligation of capital punishment; yet I think I could have strung up Hickman with my own hands with considerable satisfaction; so strongly do natural instincts, partly dependent upon the mere difference between man and woman, bias, and even determine, judgments that seem purely intellectual, and framed in what Lord Bacon called "a dry light."

It shows, besides, how utterly unfit woman would be for innumerable functions which American speculation would open to her; for her feelings warp even more than ours, and that which is her glory in its place, would unfit her for all those duties which require the abeyance of the feelings. This is the very reason, viz., her deceivability through feeling, which St. Paul wisely assigns against her usurpation of the offices of public teaching, etc., that Adam was not deceived, but Eve, etc. How deep inspiration is! so deep that, like the clear sea around the West Indies, it seems shallow until you try to dive into it.

A thought occurred to me while writing, about invasion, which escaped by the time I got to the end of the above paragraph. It was this—the distinction between the French spirit in war and ours. Theirs is "La Gloire!" Ours is "Duty!" And this was the real source of England's sublime battle-cry at Trafalgar, and the reason, too, why English troops can *stand* to be mowed down, as well as rush to the charge. It is the latter only for which the French are remarkable. "Hard pounding, gentlemen," said the Duke, at Waterloo, coming to a regiment which had lost, as some did, six hundred men before they drew a trigger; "we shall see who will pound the longest." "La Gloire" against "Duty." We shall see which will stand the longest, provided it is not all over at the first onset, which it is likely enough to be from the small practice of our best officers.

Poor — has lost his wife in confinement. I spent three hours with him to-day; some of the most profitable, in every sense of the word, that I have spent for a long time. He was severely shocked about it; he had not the slightest anticipation of such a termination. She had been going on well, and it was only on the day she died that unfavorable symptoms presented themselves. What a mournful case such an one always is! and how mysterious, remembering that Woman is in her vocation of involuntary sacrifice, giving mute obedience to the Law—life only through suffering or death; the

law to which her whole life, consciously or unconsciously, voluntarily or involuntarily, is a testimony. To me the event will be a great loss. I had promised myself a congenial acquaintance or friend—a man—for we have had several walks together and “cottoned” to each other. He is going to leave Brighton, and stay with his brother, a clergyman, to get away from sad associations and reminiscences.

I gave a lecture on Thursday to the catechumens, on Jacob’s journey from home—different from former times in treatment, and quite extempore; that is, the whole train of thought presented itself when I began, and I spoke for three-quarters of an hour, quite different from what I had intended: I have no notes.

## CXXVIII.

You are quite right in your estimate of the comparative value of Lord Carlisle’s and Mr. Drummond’s letter. I told you in a former letter how I valued the latter as the *only* indication I have received of a sympathy which had penetrated into the motive of my *Lectures*. If I did not believe that religion is poetry, and that all or most poetry is the half-way house to religion, inasmuch as the laws of both are the same, the opposites of both being Science, and the organ of both Intuition, I should not have spent my time on those *Lectures*; indeed, this I had said beforehand.

\* \* \* \* \*

My tastes are with the aristocrat, my principles with the mob. I know how the recoil from vulgarity and mobocracy, with thin-skinned over-fastidious sensitiveness, has stood in the way of my doing the good I might do. My own sympathies and principles in this matter are in constant antagonism, and until these can be harmonized, true Christianity is impracticable. A greater felt the same—Milton; but he worked far more ardently for his principles, though, as life went on, he shrank more and more from the persons with whom his principles associated him; and so at last never went even to church, detesting the dissenter’s vulgarity and the republican’s selfishness. It is now some time since I became *conscious* of this discord in me, which mars usefulness; but it is curious that two letters, one from my mother, and one from a Miss Perry, a sister of Sir Erskine Perry, who was President of the Board of Education in India—a letter not written to me—have both within ten days remarked the same thing, the latter very acutely, in a review of the poetry affair, and preaching, and pamphlets generally. Lord Falkland—you see I select grand precedents to excuse myself—lived and died in the same way; and I suspect that if the Crown were ever to tyrannize, and the people were to rise, I should be found fighting against the mob—at least if, unfortunately, a queen were sovereign. To give a less august precedent: poor Balaam was in a similar antagonism, with tastes, love of poetry, etc., on the side of Balak; principles on the side of Israel: only gold inclined the scales to the wrong side, which happily is not my temptation.

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## CXXIX.

Your note did not reach me until the afternoon post to-day. I am thoroughly worn and sore with work: prayers last week—preaching Thursday, Friday, and Sunday—prayers again to-day. The usual result has followed—low spirits and deep depression. In such moods, I can see nothing truly—all is black and hopeless; but as I know the cause to be chiefly physical, I resolve to give no utterance to transient feeling, but wait until the cloud passes. Therefore, if in this any thing sounds harsh or misanthropic, think it is not I, but one of the azure demons whose property I myself am for the nonce.



I will extract now, as nearly as I can remember, what I said about the *Birkenhead*. After showing that the glory of the Cross—the text being, “God forbid that I should glory,” etc.—consisted in “Obedience unto death,” and hence inferring that man’s real greatness lies in Duty, I said:

“And this surely is impressed upon us to-day with double power by the news which reached the shores of this country two days ago, of the sinking of four hundred and fifty Britons within sight of the shore of Africa. And yet no Englishman could have read those letters who did not feel his heart swell with proud and grateful exultation in the country which gave him birth; for the two things which were conspicuous in the whole of that dire scene, and which redeemed the disaster from the character of common, vulgar death—were the spirit of Duty and the spirit of high Sacrifice; when men, summoned suddenly from their hammocks, mustered in silence, and obeyed the word of command as calmly, and as silently, and as simply on the deck of a sinking vessel, as they would have done on the parade-ground on a gala day; and when men who had waited for permission to throw themselves overboard to save their lives, were arrested almost to a man by the first voice that warned them that they could only save themselves by the sacrifice of the women and children. God forbid that we should glory in our country’s wealth, her renown, or her military successes, merely as such; God forbid that we should glory in aught of hers, save in that English spirit of Duty and of Sacrifice, on which are stamped so unmistakably the lineaments of the Redeemer’s cross. It was this which constituted the real force of that sublime battle-cry which preceded one of the most terrific lessons ever given to the world by the lips of her artillery, and told men wherein lay the might and the majesty of a country which expects of her chosen sons, in the hour of death and danger, not that every man shall save his own life—nor that every man shall seek his own glory—but that “every man shall do his own duty.”

That is nearly what I said, and I never said anything more from my heart. I do love and honor my dear old country with all my heart and soul; her sons can not sing, paint, nor carve, but they can die at their posts silently, without thinking that “forty centuries are looking down upon them” from the Pyramids.

The women of the *Birkenhead* had not the option of sacrifice for the men. They did not know beforehand the cost at which they must be saved. Besides, if the men could have so calculated, they would not have been worth the saving. It is their self-devotion which makes us feel how much worth they were; and therefore it is like the old ordeal: if they sank they deserved saving, and if they escaped they ought to have been drowned.

#### CXXX.

I am also reading Guizot’s “*Méditations et Etudes Morales*,” in which there are some valuable thoughts, at least in that on *Immortalité*—which is the one I have read. It singularly coincides with the views I gave last Sunday, but was read since. He shows that the belief in a future life is not the result of inductive and inferential reasonings—such as the incomplete justice here, or the dissatisfaction with all earthly good—but that, rather, these result from the instinctive belief in immortality. Savages and children never doubt it: and the nearer you approach the instinctive state, the more indubitable it is. It is only when refinement, civilization, and science come that it grows dim. The attempt to rest our intuitions on a scientific basis, inevitable as the attempt is, brings with it doubt—and you get back faith again when you quit logic and science, and suffer the soul to take counsel with itself, or, in Scripture language, “when you become again a little child.” Do read Wordsworth’s glorious ode in connection with this thought, which, indeed, is the thought of the whole ode.

## CXXXI.

They tell me that it is impossible for one in the vortex of London gayety to stop; that at last a single evening at home is intolerably *ennuyeux*. I partly believe it, and can only say that if it be so, it kills body and soul, and the severe restrictions which seemed to me to be excessive, of persons whom I reckoned righteous over-much, have more sense and reason in them than I supposed. And it appears to have been the same case with the fine ladies, and, to use the cant phrase, the smart people of Antioch, Corinth, etc., etc. I suppose the Apostle had been contemplating the exhausted countenances and languid listlessness of the fashionables of the metropolis, when he said so vehemently, "She which liveth in pleasure is dead, while she liveth." I do not wonder at the success of Tractarianism among the Belgravians. Chanted services and innocent gentlemen with lilies of the valley in their dresses, must afford something of the same cooling and sedative effect which I have felt in the burning south of France, in going from a garden on the walls of which innumerable lizards basked, and the sun's rays beat down intolerably, at once into the coolness of an artificial cave.

I am not calm, yet I do try earnestly, and against many hindrances with-in and without, to rule my life by Law, and to win that composure without which nothing can be done; but much is against me, and my very duties hinder me. Here am I, on Monday morning, as languid and wretched as a London lady who has come down from her room at 11 A.M., pale and wan after an evening of dissipation; but my languor and the over-strung state of brain which will make the next two days mere endurance of life, come not from pleasure, but from public speaking. I can only get rid of my exhaustion by getting rid of my duty. To-day it is rather worse than usual, because I was obliged to give an hour last night, and on every Sunday until confirmation, to prepare some young men who can not come on any other evening. After that I drank tea with the V—s, and found them all suffering more or less from the effects of this sand-impregnated wind. I was too tired to talk. I am going to take a solitary walk on the Downs, untempting as the day and atmosphere are, to try to invigorate after yesterday, and to get up resolution for a speech at a meeting this evening, in which I take the chair.

## CXXXII.

*Prefatory Observations to Mons. Zaba's Lecture on Polish Mnemonics.*

Memory depends on two circumstances—attention and the laws of association.

## 1. Attention.

Doubtless we are born with different natural capacities of memory. I leave this to the physiologist to explain, to show why, with an equal volume of brain, one man may have judgment and another, memory; why in certain states of health we can remember better than in others.

It is unquestionable, however, that memory can be improved; and it will generally, I believe, be found that this improvement arises from increased power of fixing the attention. No one can hope to remember who has not acquired the power of concentrating his attention.

A proof that this is one of the conditions of recollecting, we have in the fact that we recollect circumstances witnessed and things learnt in childhood, whereas we forget the events of yesterday; and this because when we come into the world all is new, startling, and arrests the attention. In later life we see as if we saw not, and hear as if we heard not. All is dulled; we are familiar with all, and our attention is languid and flags.

Another proof lies in the fact that people remember chiefly those points in which their profession or circumstances most interest them. For instance,

one of the witnesses in the case of Rush, the murderer, deposed that the murderer wore a mask, or visor, made of linen or some soft material. On being cross-examined and asked how she could swear that it was not of paper, as the event occurred in a darkened house, she replied that she had observed of the mask that it did not rustle. There spoke the *woman's* memory dependent on feminine observation. No man would have remarked the material of the mask. It was the woman's province.

Another illustration occurs in the history of Jedediah Buxton, the ploughman, of wonderful arithmetical capacities. You might have given him the size of the circumference of a wheel, and he would have told you on the spot how many circumvolutions it would make in going round the globe. This was his only forte. In almost all other points he was deficient. As usual in England, they lionized the wonderful ploughman. Among other places, they took him to the Opera. Upon inquiring what he thought of the celebrated dancer, he replied, "Wonderful! she danced \*\*\* steps in so many minutes!" That was all that he had attended to; that was all that he remembered. The gracefulness, the attitudes, the science, were all thrown away on him, and would be soon forgotten. Only in his own particular department of numbers, where his attention was stimulated by habit, did he see or remember any thing.

II. Memory, again, depends upon the laws of association. What we mean by association is easily explained. When two things have been remarked together, in connection, it is a law of the mind that the presentation of the one at any future time will suggest the other. Thus, if an accident has occurred at a certain turning of a road to me, I shall never be able to pass that spot without the spontaneous reappearance in my memory of the accident; or, if my friend has been in the habit of using a particular cane, the sight of the cane will conjure up a vivid recollection of my friend.

A great anatomist of the mind\* has told us that the conditions of mental association are principally three:

1. That of analogy.
2. That of contrast.
3. That of juxtaposition.

Juxtaposition, or contiguity. As, for instance, if you were in the habit of six weeks consecutively of seeing two men walk arm in arm, the sight of the one would force you to think instantaneously of the other.

And this is the kind of association on which verbal memory depends. Words that have been in connection suggest each other. One sentence brings up the sentence that has been read before in contiguity with it. It is not the highest memory, but a very useful one.

*Contrast*—as when smallness suggests the thought of greatness, or a mean action compels you to the thought of nobleness.

The highest of all is that memory which suggests by *analogy*. It is this habit which furnishes the orator with illustrations and parallels. It is this which essentially characterizes the inventor and creator; as when the bole of a spreading oak suggested itself to Smeaton, the architect of the Eddystone Light-house, when he desired to build an edifice which should brave the storm. And it is this which makes the great historian. Let me illustrate it from the life of Dr. Hampden. When Dr. Hampden was, as it seemed to him, persecuted for his opinions, the zeal with which he espoused his cause was not merely the result of affection for his friend, or love of his views. To Arnold it recalled the innumerable parallels of the past. He saw in Hampden's judges a resurrection of the spirit which had presided in many a council like that of Constance. All the past persecution of opinion rose like a phantom

\* Aristotle.

before his mind's eye. Thus does the historian write the present and the past, by the analogy of principles; yet between the name of Huss and Hampden how little resemblance! Between the opinions of the two men how wide a difference!

These are the internal laws of memory—universal laws; the laws of suggestion:

Now, M. Zaba has invented a plan by which he proposes to assist memory by its own laws: a species of *memoria technica*, or artificial memory. Its principles, as far as I collected from a hasty sketch he gave me, are twofold:

1. It relies upon the additional aid furnished to mental memory by the eye. The importance of this aid all know who have studied history with or without a map. In the latter case memory will simply depend on the association of juxtaposition. Events and words followed one another in a certain order. If your verbal or your contiguous memory be tenacious, you may retain the circumstances; but if not, all you recollect will be confused. But if you call in the aid of eyesight, localizing this battle there, and tracing that invasion from town to town, you have got a local habitation as well as a name for your facts—the map is transferred to the inward eye.

Or you might skim over unobservantly the account of the locality of the birth of the first Prince of Wales; but if you had stood in the chamber in Carnarvon Castle where the event took place, it would be engraven there for life; or, if you had seen the axe or block in the Tower on which some historical personage suffered, how much more vivid would your recollection of his fate become!

It is a passage often quoted from an ancient poet, that objects presented to the eye stimulate the attention and the mind far more keenly than those which are merely offered to the ear or the intellect. M. Zaba's system maps out, as you see, all the past, localizing every event; and so you have in its proper shelf, or pigeon-hole, all that you would remember.

The next principle which he has summoned to his aid is that of method.

Now, without method memory is useless. Detached facts are practically valueless. All public speakers know the value of method. Persons not accustomed to it imagine that a speech is learnt by heart. Knowing a little about the matter, I will venture to say that if any one attempted that plan, either he must have a marvellous memory, or else he would break down three times out of five. It simply depends upon correct arrangement. The words and sentences are left to the moment; the thoughts methodized beforehand; and the words, if the thoughts are rightly arranged, will place themselves.

But upon the truthfulness of the arrangement all depends. Sometimes a man will find that his divisions have been artificial, and not natural. A thought is put down under a certain head, but there is no reason why it had not been in an earlier division. It belongs to both—a sure proof that the division has been false and confused. Then, in speaking, perhaps it suggests itself under the first head; and when he comes to the one where it was to have been, there is a gap, and he stumbles and blunders.

Artificial arrangement must rest on a real and natural basis, or else it will be only partially useful. Dr. Whewell, in his pamphlet—which forms one of a series delivered at the suggestion of Prince Albert, on the different departments of the Great Exhibition—shows in a very interesting way how real and *natural* the arrangement of the Exhibition was; how perfectly successful in consequence; and how they gradually fell into the natural arrangement, after former Exhibitions had step by step corrected the mistakes of a more arbitrary and artificial division.

Now, the practicability and value of M. Zaba's scheme will mainly depend upon the question whether his method is simply artificial, or whether the arbitrary division rests upon a natural reason. For instance, each year is

divided into nine compartments—one representing a sovereign; a second, revolution; a third, invention; and so on. I invite him to explain this. Nine is an artificial number. Do nine particulars exhaust the chief subjects that are memorable? Do they interfere with each other? etc., etc.

One thing more. I trust he will recollect the difference between the English and the Polish intellect. Our national character excels in perseverance; theirs in talent. They can learn many languages with facility. A friend—I may call him such—of my own, a Pole, had extraordinary faculties of this kind. He told me all his countrymen shared it. The name of Count Strelczki is known to some of you. His talent is multifarious—universal. From the colonial capacities of Australia to the diameter of an extinct crater in one of the Polynesian islands, from the details of an Irish poor-law to the chemical composition of malachite, he is at home in all departments of literature and science. M. Zaba's son—a most intelligent young gentleman—has exhibited wonderful knowledge. But I ask—he has had experience—how far is the system applicable to our obtuse and low English intellects? How long will an Anglo-Saxon boy be occupied in mastering the system?

## CXXXIII.

Last night I began Margaret Fuller Ossoli. The reviews had prejudiced me against her by most unfair extracts, which give no idea whatever of her character as a whole; and it is only one more out of many lessons to judge for one's self, and not to accept the offices of a taster. I got through the first volume almost before I went to bed. I was much pleased: an exceedingly rich nature—growing weeds luxuriantly, but fewer than might have been expected. At the commencement are some remarkably well-put observations respecting the hackneyed subject of the Greeks and Romans; but I agree with one of the editors in what he says about being “almost” Christian. For self-development is not the aim of Christianity, much higher though it be than ordinary paganism, and better too than evangelicalism, which does not mean quite so much by its watch-word, “Save your own soul.”

Old friends are quite as easy to put off as old gloves, but not quite so easy to draw on again—they have been damped, dried, and can not open themselves as largely as before. How few can, like Margaret Ossoli, keep the threads of many acquaintances and friendships in the hand, without breaking any or entangling any? I have begun the third volume—her “Residence in Europe:” in the first pages are some beautiful passages; but her “Residence in Paris” rather startles and revolts me. The words “noble,” “good,” etc., etc., which she bestows upon that profligate and licentious George Sand are profanation. What are they worth if they are given indiscriminately? Paris seems to warp and injure every spirit that comes within its unnatural atmosphere. It is the natural birthplace of Phædras and Pasiphaës, and all that is refinedly brutal. My beau-ideal of a devil, or rather imp nature, is a Parisian woman, thoroughly refined and thoroughly corrupted. And I knew one or two who were admirable approximations. \* \* \*

## CXXXIV.

I have nearly read through Latham on the “English Language,” a tough book; and also his “English Grammar.” I have begun them again, in the way of slow and patient study. Once master of the subject, I shall be able to teach it. The great mistake in teaching is to suppose that, in order to teach elements, only rudimentary knowledge is required. I believe the foundations must have been *approfondis*; not that such teaching need be deep, but it must rest on depths. Results are for production, and the public; but it may cost years to get the freedom of stroke which passes for an off-hand inspiration of the moment; and long familiarity with a subject is the only condition on

which facility of expression, abundance of illustration, and power of connecting the smallest parts with principles and with the whole, can be obtained.

I have resolved to master Latham, Physical Geography, and Wallenstein, before I leave for Ireland; also to get through the visiting of my congregation. It is always a good plan to fix definite periods for completing work, else it drags on uncompleted for months, perhaps forever. This, with my other work, will be all that I can manage, for I am no longer able to read hard. I sat up late two nights ago, and am suffering from it still.

How admirable those extracts are which you quote from Margaret F. Ossoli's "Life!" I agree with what she says about diffuseness in giving out an idea. I am sure the opposite has been my fault, and caused much to fall to the ground inoperatively. I am trying to get over it, and will yet more.

#### CXXXV.

It is now nearly midnight—the only enjoyable time for writing, thought, or contemplation during this intense heat. By the side of a wall with a southern aspect the heat is of tropical sultriness, the sunbeams striking off almost as in the focus of a convex glass, and you look along the stones expecting to see the lizards basking in numbers as in the South of Europe. Several persons, I am told, have fallen dead in the open field: yet, severe as it is here, they say it is much worse inland, for during some hours of the day we have a refreshing sea-breeze. Indeed, I am speaking more of others' feelings than my own, for to me the intensest heat is always delightful. At this moment sheet-lightnings are, from time to time, transforming a very dark sky into a brilliant sheet of fire.

What you remark about Margaret Ossoli's "Life" is quite true. I think there is an apparent decline in power and intellect during her stay in Italy; but then it is to be remembered, in the first place, that the painful and stirring scenes of war and revolution in which she was called to act called out the woman's heart more than the brain, and the sad realities of the hospital dulled all inclination to soar into realms of speculation, philosophy, and past history. What was the question of "woman's future position" side by side with splints and bandages, and all things apparently going backward? Then, in the second place, we must not forget that the whole of her papers concerning Italy were lost in the shipwreck, and in them alone could we expect her intellectual powers to have found a field. It is a life suggestive of much, and that not all pleasing. There is much out of joint in the body social and politic; say rather in our own hearts.

I have received a letter from an intelligent lady, which, I confess, pained me. In reply, I told her there was one thing of which she could not deprive me—the certainty of having done her much good; that having listened for years with reliance and trust, the truths of feeling and life which I have taught must have mixed with her life—can not be separated from her being—must grow and produce a harvest which I shall claim hereafter as my harvest, and of which no power in the universe can rob me. I briefly explained her misconception of my views, telling her that the difference between them and those of the party whose views she expounds does not lie in the question of the Atonement—we agree in this—but in the question, *what* in that atonement was the element that satisfied God? They say pain. I say, because I think the Scriptures say so, the surrender of self-will, as is clearly and distinctly asserted in John x. 17; and also in Hebrews x. 5, 6, 7, 10, where the distinction is drawn between the sacrifices of blood and suffering, which were mere butchery, and the Sacrifice which atones, in this special point, that one is moral, an act of "WILL"—the other un-moral, merely physical, and therefore worthless. Indeed, this is the whole argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and a glorious one it is. But I strongly recommended her to persevere in

her resolve to quit Trinity, since it is not views which mould character, but a spirit; since our mysterious being is only capable of being stirred by the higher springs of action, trust, reliance, reverence, love; and when trust is gone, neither wisdom nor truth from the lips of a teacher can avail any thing.

However, as a specimen of a class, the circumstance pained me. How long will the rest remain? Only until they clearly comprehend what I surely try to make plain as my meaning; then I shall be alone, as I expected years ago. Still, this desertion one by one is painful.

Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?  
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.

Well, all the dearer will be the true and few who remain. So it was with Him.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel.

Wise, profound Shakspeare!

#### CXXXVI.

MY DEAR —,—Receive all grateful thanks for your nice list, nearly all of which I have already selected for my brother, and sent by this day's post. I feel bound in honor to make the *amende honorable* for my hasty acceptance of the verdict of reviews on Margaret Fuller Ossoli, and acknowledge that she was a noble creature, and that I have read her life with increasing depth of interest, with respect and admiration, and—no! not with tears, but—a certain moisture on the eyelids, the result of reading by a bad light, or too long, or too late—nothing else! I honor her because she was not a man, and could not have been if she had tried; nor a blue, but a woman, whose brain was all heart, and who fulfilled her mission of the friend, and her more sacred mission of the comforter, right nobly. There—I was wrong, and you can make as ungenerous a use of the acknowledgment as you can—that is, as you have it in you to make; which is a moral inability. But it only corroborates my convictions on the general subject. Margaret never looked at one single subject from the point of view from which a man would have contemplated it, and her high-sounding abstractions only veiled her intense belief in and love of living personalities. She was a splendid proof of “how divine a thing a woman may be made.”

#### CXXXVII.

The poor ignorant Roman Catholics, are they to be taught their duty by leaving them to the priests, or by living among them and showing them who are their true friends? There is a fearful debt due to Ireland which has been accumulating for centuries, through absenteeism and landlords, whose interests have been in England, and not in Ireland. By the unalterable law of retribution it has all come on this generation; and the way to perpetuate it with ever-accumulating interest on the next generation is to pursue the same old, false, vicious system which has made Ireland what she is.

As to the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill, nothing has altered my opinion. The old system was monstrous, and the Act was only one of justice. Roman Catholics in France are more attached to their country than to the Papacy, and so they are in Germany. But the mad Orange system, which would wean the affections of a persecuted and unprivileged Roman Catholic from his country and fix them on Rome—banish them from Maynooth to be educated at St. Omer or other foreign seminaries—forces him to be an Ultramontane. I earnestly trust England will never pause, much less retrograde, in the path of fairness and justice on which she has entered. No doubt many immediate consequences will seem bad, but trust to principle and time. Stockport riots, ferocious altar-pieces—what do they come from but

Ecclesiastical Titles Bills and proclamations against Roman Catholic worship? No; the old "root-and-branch" system of extermination must either be done thoroughly, or else you must not exasperate a foe whom you have not crippled. Extermination is possible. It succeeded in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. But, then, it must be thorough, with fire and sword, and banishment. If not, there is nothing left but the concession of full political privileges. Make them Britons before you attempt to make them Protestants: once Britons, half the venom of their Romanism will be extracted. And then secular education is your sure ally to do the rest—sure and safe, because it does not attack their religion directly, and you will have the people on your side against the priests as in the Thurley affair.

What appalls me is to see the way in which people, once liberal, are now recoiling from their own principles, terrified by the state of the Continent, and saying we must stem the tide of democracy, and therefore support the Conservatives. Why, what has ever made democracy dangerous but Conservatism? French revolutions—socialism—why people really seem to forget that these things came out of Toryism, which forced the people into madness. What makes rivers and canals overflow?—deep channels cut ever deeper, or dams put across by wise people to stop them?

#### CXXXVIII.

It is only one hour or two since I left Lewes, the work of the Assize being over, and to me it was rather a wearisome work. Yet I do not regret having had this office this year, for it has given me an insight into criminal court practice, which I never should have had but for this occasion, for nothing else would have compelled me to sit twice for four or five days together through every case. The general result of my experience is, that although Burke says, "The whole end and aim of legislation is to get twelve men into a jury-box," yet the jury system, beautiful as it is in theory, is in itself neither good nor bad, but depends upon two things—first, the national character; secondly, the judge; and on this last almost entirely. The Chief-Justice, Sir John Jervis, was the criminal judge this time, and his charges to the jury surpassed in brilliance, clearness, interest, and conciseness any thing I ever could have conceived. The dullest cases became interesting directly he began to speak—the most intricate and bewildered clear. I do not think above one verdict was questionable in the whole thirty-six cases which he tried. One was a very curious one, in which a young man of large property had been fleeced by a gang of blacklegs on the turf, and at cards. Nothing could exceed the masterly way in which Sir John Jervis untwined the web of sophistries with which a very clever counsel had bewildered the jury. A private note-book, with initials for names, and complicated gambling accounts, was found on one of the prisoners. No one seemed to be able to make head or tail of it. The Chief-Justice looked it over and most ingeniously explained it all to the jury. Then there was a pack of cards which had been pronounced by the London detectives to be a perfectly fair pack. They were examined in court; every one thought them to be so, and no stress was laid upon the circumstance. However, they were handed to the Chief-Justice. I saw his keen eye glance very inquiringly over them while the evidence was going on. However, he said nothing, and quietly put them aside. When the trial was over and the charge began, he went over all the circumstances till he got to the objects found upon the prisoners. "Gentlemen," said he, "I will engage to tell you, without looking at the faces, the name of every card upon this pack." A strong exclamation of surprise went through the court. The prisoners looked aghast. He then pointed out that on the backs, which were figured with wreaths and flowers in dotted lines all over, there was a small flower in the right-hand corner of each like this :



The number of dots in this flower was the same on all the kings, and so on, in every card through the pack. A knave would be perhaps marked thus—.....; an ace thus—.; and so on; the difference being so slight, and the flowers on the back so many, that, even if you had been told the general principle, it would have taken a considerable time to find out which was the particular flower which differed. He told me afterwards that he recollected a similar expedient in Lord De Ros's case, and therefore set to work to discover the trick. But he did it while the evidence was going on, which he himself had to take down in writing.

Another thing he did very well. A man was robbed. Among the coins he had was a sou, a Portsea token, and another the name of which I forget—a sort of halfpenny. A man was taken up on suspicion, and in his pocket, with some other money, were three such coins. The prosecutor could only swear that he had had three such. He could not identify, nor could he swear to any of the other pieces. The counsel for the defense proved in evidence that all these coins are extremely common in Brighton, where the robbery took place, and the case seemed to have broken down, by the countenances of the jury. "Gentlemen," said the Chief-Justice, "the question has to be tried by the doctrine of chances. The sou is common, the token is common, and the third coin too. The chances are, that perhaps a thousand sours are in the pockets of different people in Brighton; that five hundred tokens are so too, and perhaps fifteen hundred of the other; but the chances are very great against two men in Brighton having each a sou and a token, and almost infinite against two men having each in his pocket at the same time a sou, a token, and the third coin. You must, therefore, add this to the rest of the evidence, not as a weak link, but as a very strong one."

My sermon was from John vii. 17, not the one I had intended to take, as I meant to preach from John xviii. 38—"What is truth?" but I did not feel up to it. I therefore took the old one, and considerably improved as a composition, leaving the main features unaltered, and it forms a very good sequence to the sermon at the first Assizes.

## CXXXIX.

July 30.

This week has been spent in visiting my people, all of whom I hope to see before I leave Brighton.

Mr. V.—dined with me yesterday, and the day before. I was in very good spirits: I walked home with him by the soft light of a most lovely moon, and thought I had never seen the silver flood on the sea more tender in its lustre—the sound of the waves was more plangent than usual.

Martineau's views about Inspiration I think, on the whole, correct. He would not, I presume, deny that artistic power, etc., can be called in a sense inspiration; but he rightly draws a distinction between that kind of power and the power to which we, by common consent, chiefly consign the word. All power is from God. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the gifts of the Spirit take in healing, etc., as in the Old Testament Bezaleel and Aholiab are said to be taught by God. In opposition to such as limit to spiritual truth the results of Divine agency, it appears to be important to assert the great truth, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above;" but, then, I do think that those who have most volubly reasserted this forgotten truth have been in danger of levelling these gifts of the intellect with the moral gifts of character. Both come from God, and therefore they assume that both are equally Divine, which is as fallacious as to say, God created men and worms, and therefore worms are equal to men. To assert that the sphere of the Divinest is in moral gifts, is almost identical with Christianity; to assert that the Divine is only in them, is an exaggeration dangerous and false. About a

year ago I strongly urged this distinction on a man of some ability who published a little *brochure* on the prophets—a working-man—and made him insert it in his preface to correct the tendency of his book in the other direction. Did I not give you one with a dedication to myself?

One of Carlyle's faults, as it seems to me, is this very tendency to see the Divine everywhere, and to make little distinction between the amount of Divinity which is contained in different forces, provided only that they be Force. Now the prophetic power, in which I suppose is chiefly exhibited that which we mean by inspiration, depends almost entirely on moral greatness. The prophet discerned large principles true for all time—principles social, political, ecclesiastical, and principles of life—chiefly by largeness of heart and sympathy of spirit with God's spirit. That is my conception of inspiration. Much that Theodore Parker says is very valuable, though I am of the opinion that Martineau has, with much sagacity and subtlety, corrected in that review certain expressions which are too unguarded, and which, unless modified, are untrue. "My judgment is just because I seek not my own will, but the Will of Him that sent me;" that is the very canon of inspiration. Sometimes I feel inclined to write a treatise on the subject; but then indolence, hopelessness, and self-distrust come in the way and nip the resolve in the bud, or, rather, nip it before it sets into resolve.

#### CXL.

The Apostles lived in anticipation of an immediate end of the world, no doubt; but I can not see that this, on the whole, was any thing but good. It was this which drew the Christians so closely together—made their union so remarkable, and startled the world, to which, otherwise, the new religion would have appeared merely a Philosophy, and not a Life. Besides, are we sure that aught less strong than this hope could have detached men so instantly and entirely from the habits of long sin; or that, on natural principles and without a miracle, even the Apostles could have been induced to crowd so much superhuman energy into so small a compass?

I think the great main doctrine of Christ is that Truth is Light, and they who love the light come to it; that wisdom is justified by her children; that the Jews did not hear Him because they were not His sheep; and, therefore, that the Gospel was truth appealing to the heart much more than demonstrable to the senses. Hence, "If they heard not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded" by the most marvellous miracle.

But this did not exclude a secondary kind of proof for a lower kind of mind; see, especially, John xiv. 11, where the two kinds of proofs are given, and one subordinated to the other. It is quite consistent with God's wisdom to reveal Himself to the senses as well as the soul; and if the Gospel were utterly deficient in this latter kind of proof, one great evidence that it is from God would be wanting—an evidence which we are justified in expecting from the analogies of nature. God has written His glory, for instance, in the heart; at the same time, He has so constructed the visible universe that "the heavens declare the glory of God." And when the Eternal Word is manifested into the world, we naturally expect that divine power shall be shown as well as divine beneficence. Miracles, therefore, are exactly what we should expect, and, I acknowledge, a great corroboration and verification of His claims to Sonship. Besides, they startled and aroused many to His claims who otherwise would not have attended to them. Still the great truth remains untouched, that they, appealing only to the natural man, can not convey the spiritual certainty of truth which the spiritual man alone apprehends. However, as the natural and spiritual in us are both from God, why should not God have spoken both to the natural and spiritual part of us; and why should not Christ appeal to the natural works, subordinate always to the spiritual self-evidence of Truth itself?

You say, "St. Paul appeals in the Romans to divine sovereignty and might, and does it not prove that Might makes Right, and that it is right to act thus, and thus only, because the Supreme power has willed it?" Not at all. The spirit of the sentence seems to me only that of another expression of his, "Let God be true and every man a liar." It is a reply to some one finding fault captiously with the constitution of things, and asking the reason why higher privileges, etc., are not given. And to this it is enough to say, "God has willed." But St. Paul takes for granted all through that the will is a holy will. Suppose two children disputing about a fact or a principle; one argues and disputes, the other cuts the whole matter short by saying, "I know it is so—papa said so." Could we justly infer that that child considered its father's word to be the origin of truth, and enough to establish it, though it had not existed before? No; but it only takes for granted, from its father's known veracity, that the questionable matter must be so in spite of all appearances against it. Yet, as its expression is loosely worded, in reply only to a particular argument, an acute metaphysician, who was determined to extract metaphysics out of a child's argument, might easily make such a view appear to be unconsciously the child's view of truth. Now St. Paul, I believe, wrote in the same way. He is not dealing in any way with the metaphysical question of the foundation of Right, but only with the popular Jewish question, "What right have the Gentiles to the Messiah?—what claim have they to be chosen instead of the Jews?" He says, "Nay; but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" God has a right to do what He will with his creatures. But, observe, he never assumes or implies that God has a right to create moral evil; that simply does not enter into his conception, and would have been horrible and shocking to him.

The inspiration of the Bible is a large subject. I hold it to be inspired, not dictated. It is the word of God—the words of man: as the former, perfect; as the latter imperfect. God the Spirit, as the Sanctifier, does not produce absolute perfection of human character; God the Spirit, as an Inspirer, does not produce absolute perfection of human knowledge; and for the same reason in both cases—the human element which is mixed up—else there could have been no progressive dispensations. Let us take the case—the history of the creation. Now, I hold that a spiritual revelation from God *must* involve scientific incorrectness: it could not be from God unless it did. Suppose that the cosmogony had been given in terms which would satisfy our present scientific knowledge, or, say, rather the terms of absolute scientific truth: It is plain that, in this case, the men of that day would have rejected its authority: they would have said, "Here is a man who tells us the earth goes round the sun: and the sky, which we see to be a stereoma fixed and not far up, is infinite space, with no *firmament* at all, and so on. Can we trust one in matters unseen who is manifestly in error in things seen and level to the senses? Can we accept his revelation about God's nature and man's duty, when he is wrong in things like these?" Thus, the faith of this and subsequent ages must have been purchased at the expense of the unbelief of all previous ages. I hold it, therefore, as a proof of inspiration of the Bible, and divinely wise, to have given a spiritual revelation, *i. e.*, a revelation concerning the truths of the soul and its relation to God, in popular and incorrect language. Do not mistake that word incorrect; incorrect is one thing, false another. It is scientifically incorrect to say that the sun rose this morning; but it is not false, because it conveys all that is required, for the nonce, to be known about the fact, time, etc. And if God were giving a revelation in this present day, He would give it in modern phraseology, and the men He inspired would talk of sunrise, sunset, etc. Men of science smile at the futile attempts to reconcile Moses and geology. I give up the attempt at once, and say, the inspiration of the Bible remains intact for

all that—nay, it would not have been inspired, except on this condition of incorrectness.

Neologianism is a large word, and embraces an almost endless variety of views; but, to be candid, I look upon Bibliolatry with quite as much dislike as Arnold did—as pernicious, dangerous to true views of God and His revelation to the human race, and the cause of much bitter Protestant Popery, or claims to infallibility of interpretation, which nearly every party puts forth. I believe Bibliolatry to be as superstitious, as false, and almost as dangerous as Romanism.

Men try, you say, to find resting-places for Faith in Reason, rather than for Reason in Faith. If there has been a single principle which I have taught more emphatically than any other, it is that not by reason—meaning, by reason, the understanding—but by the spirit, that is, the heart, trained in meekness and love by God's Spirit, truth can be judged of at all. I hold that the attempt to rest Christianity upon miracles and fulfillments of prophecy is essentially the vilest rationalism; as if the trained intellect of a lawyer, which can investigate evidence, were that to which is trusted the soul's salvation; or, as if the evidence of the senses were more sure than the intuitions of the spirit to which spiritual truths almost *alone* appeal. It is not in words (though they are constant), but in the deepest convictions and first principles of my soul, that I feel the failure of intellect in this matter. Indeed, the common complaint against me is, that I make too little of the proofs addressed to the understanding. I complain of Evangelicalism because it tries to explain the Atonement by Reason—a debtor's and creditor's account. As to the desire after breadth and comprehension, that I confess. I am sick of hatred, suspicion, slander, and condemnation of one another, and long to believe in men's good rather than in their evil, in God rather than in the devil. I believe I hold "the distinctive features of my religion" sharply enough, too sharply for a great many people; but I can not and will not judge those who do not hold them as I do; nay, I go farther, I will not cease trying to love them, and believing that, under other words, they often express the truths that I hold most dear. To the question, Who is my neighbor? I reply, as my Master did, by the example that He gave, "The alien and the heretic." And I do not think that He will say my charity is too large, or my inclusiveness too great. Alas! alas! when I see Romanists cursing the Church of England, Evangelicals shaking their heads about the Christianity of Tractarians, Tractarians banning Dissenters, Dissenters anathematizing Unitarians, and Unitarians of the old school condemning the more spiritual ones of the new—I am forced to hope that there is more inclusiveness in the Love of God than in the bitter orthodoxy of sects and churches. I find only two classes who roused His divine indignation when on earth: those who excluded bitterly—the Scribes, and those of a religious name—the popular religious party of the day, who judged frailty and error bitterly—the Pharisees. I am certain that I do not "dilute" truth, at least what I count truth, nor hold lax views about opinions; but I am certain that men are often better than their creed, and that our Lord's mode of judging of the tree by its fruits is the only true one.

#### CXLI.

Your welcome letter reached me safely yesterday afternoon, surrounded with business. The calmness of weather of which you speak did not extend to the Irish Channel, for it was blowing hard out of harbor, and, besides, the effects of the late gales remained upon the surface of the sea, which was like a boiling caldron. I never felt so ill at sea in my life. I sent off a telegraphic dispatch to B—to say I should probably not be at home on Sunday, but I afterwards resolved to overcome the weakness, and reached London just in time.

I feel already the lack of severe exercise—the only remedy for excitable nerves. On my way in the train I purchased and partly read Prescott's articles, collected from the "North American Review." They are good, but not so much out of the common as I expected. Indeed, except for the refreshing character of every thing American, which is young and not *blasé*, like European literature, I should say they are not above par; but the above peculiarity makes all that comes from the New World interesting. How devoutly it is to be hoped that, in the coming conflict of the nations, America and England will stand side by side, instead of opposite; for, if not, it will be all over with the cause of liberty, for some centuries at least. The conqueror in the strife will be then a military power, and must perforce crush the peoples under a tyranny. And as to a universal war, that is inevitable, and in every direction men's minds are foreboding it—a very strange symptom of the times to be so prevalent long before a single *casus belli* has made its appearance. It is one of those mysterious phenomena which plunge you into the deep question of Prophecy—what it is in our human nature, and how and why it works. At present this anticipation resembles the inexplicable awe and sense of coming danger which makes the dumb, unreasoning cattle restless at the approach of a thunder-storm. I am told that the Ministry are full of apprehensions, and that even the late Cabinet would have taken much more decisive measures but for their fear of that infatuated Manchester Peace school. Strange, that people with so much to lose in case of war should be so blindly unwilling to pay in the present for the means of peace!

I mean to work very hard soon at Wordsworth, his life, principles, and poetry—a large subject.

Another most strange thing: a young man has been longing only to live until my return. "When will Mr. Robertson be back? I must hear his voice again." He is dying; and a lady has been waiting in the same way—a Mrs. — saw me at nine A.M. yesterday, and died at six. I must not, and ought not, to regret that I did not stay.

#### CXLII.

There is an old friend of mine whose income does not exceed £2000, and whose charities are at least £1200 annually. Certainly, with examples such as hers, and comparing what most of us spend upon ourselves, it does seem the very acme of effrontery and impudence to call ourselves Christians. A young gentleman's cigars, or a young lady's ribbons, would save a human creature's life, and make ten happy. I am tempted sometimes to resolve I will never again suffer the word self-sacrifice to pass my lips, which now so often and so smoothly runs from them, and that I will not suffer it to fall unchallenged from the lips of others. In Christ's day people used similar unmeaning sentimentalisms, but He always took them up, as it were, and forced them to weigh the meaning of their words; as, for instance, to the women who came out with a fine piece of sentiment, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee," He replied, "Yea rather, blessed are they who know the word of God and keep it;" and to the man who said, "Blessed is he that shall eat meat in the kingdom of God," He spoke forthwith the Parable of the Wedding Guest Expelled, with the obvious application—"Yes, true enough, but do you know *how* true what you say is 'Blessed,' for many shall *not eat bread* in that kingdom?"

#### CXLIII.

There are some persons whose language respecting Ireland is positively unchristian, and only to be paralleled by the tone used of the *canaille* by the French nobles just before the terrible retribution of the Revolution. Women are taught history in a way that is utterly useless and unpractical, else the

past wrongs of Ireland would forever haunt them, and the present squalidness, beggary, and demoralization would conjure up a hideous picture of the past, and, reminding of the law of retribution, tie the tongue when it was inclined to abuse. What are the antecedents of the present state of things? At whose door must the guilt lie, but at that of the ancestors of those who now inherit the soil? But French revolutions teach nobody! And the study of the history of bees and ants would do people, I verily believe, as much good as the study of human history. So with the Jews of old: they were very weather-wise, but could not read "the signs of the times." Jewish ladies were a good deal surprised when they found themselves sold as slaves to Romish voluptuaries; and Parisian ladies were equally astonished when, having spent such enormous sums on their *coiffures* and ribbons, they one fine day found their head-dresses arranged for them at the national expense, *à la guillotine*. Jewish prophets reminded people pretty clearly of what had been, and Isaiah went somewhat minutely into the expenditure of the Jewish ladies on their pretty persons, while the cause of the widow and fatherless was uncared for; but they laughed at him till he became importunate, and then they thought it *un peu trop fort*, and poor Isaiah was sawn in two, and he bothered them no longer about their "chains," and their "bracelets," and their "mufflers," their "changeable suits of apparel," the "glasses" and the "fine linens," the "hoods" and the "veils." I wonder what they thought when Nebuchadnezzar invaded the country and their own *canaille* betrayed them to the conqueror! Do not give way to impatience about poor Ireland; likely enough Mr. C—— may have failed partially. Why, God's own Son failed; and if, after His failures with you and me, He were to give us up as incorrigible, I wonder where we should be to-morrow. And yet we think a few charitable efforts are to succeed at once, and undo the accumulated vice of years. I knew a young lady whose views on this subject were the most *naïves* I ever heard. She went down once to ——, and lectured the poor wretches upon their dirt and uncomfortable habits and houses, and—hear it, earth and heaven!—they did not repent them of their evil ways, and reform at the voice of that angelic visitation. It is just possible that, never having *seen* cleanliness or comfort, they did not know *what* she wanted them to aim at, or *how* to begin. Mrs. Fry would have bought them a bit of soap, and washed a child's fingers with her own hands as a specimen, and drawn out a little set of rules, and paraded the family once a week, half in fun and good-humoredly, to see that her orders were obeyed; and she would have gone on for a year, and if at the end of a year she saw a little dawn of improvement, she would have thanked God and taken courage. But fine young ladies think that an eloquent cut of a riding-whip through the air in the last Belgravian fashion is to electrify a Celtic village, and convert a whole population of savages to civilized tastes and English habits.

The patient drudgery of love which does God's work, however, is not learned in Belgravia. Well, the aristocracy of the next world will be the Frys, and the Chisholms, and the people who do not care for being smart, and are not afraid, like their Master, "to lay their hands" upon the wretches whom they would rescue. I do not know that any thing in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" struck me so much as that remark!—it was one of those which are suggestive of worlds of thought, and send a whole flood of light into a subject.

Mr. C——, you say, has spent his life on his property, trying to ameliorate, etc., and he has failed. "Well," as Lord Carlisle said, "Heaven is for those who have failed on earth"—failed *so*. Is Mr. C——, disgusted with ingratitude, going to throw up all, and give himself up to a life of pleasure? Well, quote to him, "Look to yourselves that we lose not the things that we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." Quote to

him, "Servant of God, well done; well hast thou fought the better fight who singly hast maintained." Quote to him, "Into whatever house ye enter, salute that house; and if the son of peace be there, your blessing shall remain; if not, it shall return to you again."

In the moments when life presents itself to me in its true, solemn aspect, I feel that I would rather be the author of such a failure than of all the success and glory of Wellington; and I suspect one or two more will think so in the Day of Judgment.

You wonder at my wish to go to the war at the Cape. I think it is because my feeling of life is antagonism rather than tenderness. I suppose to see, in visible flesh and blood, that which I might legitimately call my foe, would be a relief from that vague sense of invisible opposition with which my life is encompassed. No doubt the true end to which this feeling is meant to conduct is hostility to Evil; but Evil in the abstract is so hard to hate that we are forever identifying it with the concrete, and longing to grapple with it in a form. Such, I suppose, is the true interpretation of the Psalms, where so much hatred is expended on God's enemies—meaning men—and which modern writers have rightly spiritualized, though on most loose and inconsistent principles. They take Moab and Ammon and Babylon to mean certain modern persons or principles, feeling that, taken literally, the spirit of denunciation is irreligious. But the Psalmists did not mean this. David and others meant Moab, etc.; but that which was true in their feeling was the human indignation against the Evil in Moab and Ammon, which they could not separate in idea from them. It is this, stripped of the local, transitory, and Jewish form in which it appears, which is everlastingly true: in other words, the prophetic spirit. And as such, to say that, transferred to our times, our Babylon, our Ammon, are such-and-such evils, is perfectly true, and to hate them is the real essence of the lesson of those Psalms, and is that which is true and eternal in them. All this out of my instinctive love of war!

I sat with the S—s for half an hour two days ago, just after the sublimest and most wonderful sunset I ever saw in my life. S. T. quite agreed that it was so. A mighty mass of blood-red crimson, mottled richly with gold, spread over the whole west, miles broad and many degrees high. In this were lakes of purest green, like that of the lakes of Switzerland. It was startling from its mass and majesty. Turning a corner, I came on it suddenly, and absolutely gasped for a moment.

#### CXLIV.

To-morrow is the funeral of the Great Duke. I do not think I shall go up, though I am tempted by the thought that it might be an impression for life for Charlie. Old England has departed for once from her habit of unostentatious funerals, and I am not one who think that in this case she has done unwisely: to bury the Duke as common greatness is buried would be out of place. Such men take a century to grow, and we can not have another such in this generation. If you could find a man equal in genius, you could not have the tried of eighty years until eighty years are gone. This old, dull country which the filigree nations laugh at, with her inconsistencies and her prejudices, how sound at heart she is in the way she does her hero-worship, and what unique heroes hers are!—Duty, the watch-word of Nelson and Wellington—the last sublime battle-cry of the one and long life-law of the other—and no splash nor dash nor French theatricals about either of them.

His long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.

Tennyson has put it all into one pregnant line. Nelson, Adelaide, Welling-

ton—these have been the *great* mournings of England in this century ; and Peel, because men thought there was a sacrifice in him too, in his degree. Yes, Goodness, Duty, Sacrifice—these are the qualities that England honors. She gapes and wonders every now and then, like an awkward peasant, at some other things—railway kings, electro-biology, and other trumperies—but nothing stirs her grand old heart down to its central deeps universally and long except the Right. She puts on her shawl very badly, and she is awkward enough in a concert-room, scarcely knowing a Swedish nightingale from a jackdaw ; but—blessings large and long upon her !—she knows how to teach her sons to sink like men amongst sharks and billows, without parade, without display, as if duty were the most natural thing in the world, and she never mistakes long an actor for a hero or a hero for an actor. Men like Arnold and Wordsworth she recognizes at last—men like Wellington, more visibly right, at once, and with unalterable fidelity. I do love my dear old blundering country, and I forgive her the few deaths caused at the lying-in-state by her awkwardness and want of experience in spectacles, and with plenary indulgence prospective, all the mistakes and even absurdities she will probably be guilty of to-morrow.

Christmas Eve, 1852.

MY DEAR—, — Though I am in haste to get to work, it being Christmas Eve, I will not let your note remain unanswered ; but I fear it must be done concisely.

And first, let me say that I can deeply appreciate any views which have not egotism for their basis ; views like yours, which are earnest and unselfish.

Perhaps I mistake them ; but if I do not, the “greatest happiness” theory seems to lie at the root of them. Now, granting that this is the motive of the Supreme Mind (which I do only for the sake of argument), I believe it can not be ours, safely, ever. I do not doubt that duty will be found on the inductions of a very large experience to coincide with the greatest happiness ; but I believe that if the happiness of others were the motive, duty would often be sacrificed, because we can not always see its ultimate tendencies ; and to do right will sometimes appear the worst for others that can be imagined.

I *entirely* disagree with your conceptions of *his* motives. To do his Father’s will, to drink the appointed cup, to submit to a law of the universe, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground,” etc., these were his *motives* ; in every form of words He says so. No doubt, at times He speaks as foreseeing the good which would result ; but never that I know of does He speak of that as his chief motive. Of course, to *see* that ultimate good and duty coincide makes duty easier, and gave Him comfort and joy ; but in his darker hours the good seemed hidden, and perhaps problematical. I think I can not be mistaken here. Could you know *how* I have lived in his mind, and tried to understand Him, till comprehension became adoration, you would think so. I am not pretending to a superior appreciation beyond yours—except only on this ground, that professionally forced to the contemplation, and forced more terribly by doubts and difficulties that nearly shattered morals and life, till I was left alone with myself and Him, I am, perhaps, qualified to speak with a decision that would be otherwise dogmatism.

I think you mistook what I said about infinitesimal fractions of harm divided among numbers. What I meant was, that the motive of doing right because of the harm that results from doing wrong would be insufficient in strong temptation ; when the argument would run fairly enough, “Intense present joy to one individual of the world, at least—myself—and possible harm divided among so many as to be inappreciable by any. Why should I hesitate to enjoy ?”

In the preventive check principle this is, I think, indisputable. No human being, I suppose, ever abstained from marriage, if *really in love*, on



consideration of the results his marriage might hereafter have on the labor market.

And I quite agree with you, the case you put is parallel, that of benevolent actions. When one sees how the noblest schemes fail, or begins to question the results of this or that act, uncertain whether it will or not produce good, I confess it seems to me that with this motive only deep-thinking or sadly-feeling hearts would let all opportunities go by. O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you—how long shall I suffer you?

But any thing, my dear —, to abolish that detestable doctrine which is preached in some evangelical pulpits, that self-happification is the great duty, or, as they call it, saving one's own soul; which is merely prudence on a large scale, and makes worldly selfishness wrong, only because it is a short-sighted calculation.

Act, if you can, for the general good; or, rather, think that you act so, for your heart is too feminine and tender to be swayed by abstractions.

To express, in a sentence or two, my feelings:

God's will: not man's happiness.

Right: not a balance of profit and loss.

God's will and Right will eventuate in man's happiness, and in a balance of profit; but with these things I feel myself unable to grapple.

Do not think I treat your views or arguments lightly. I honor you for them. And, besides, I am inclined to think that I have attacked the tendencies of your views, rather than the views you really hold.

But I have written so hurriedly, that I fear this hasty sketch is not worth sending. May God bless you and teach you—better than I can—and teach me, for I deeply need it, and feel only that truth is infinite, and my guesses at it are few and blundering.

Yours, with most sincere esteem,

F. W. R.

## CHAPTER XI.

1853.

Friendship of Mr. Robertson with Lady Byron.—State of his Health.—Advance of Disease.—Sermons of this Year.—The Principles which underlie his Teaching.—Adoration of the Virgin.—Sacrament of the Mass.—Purgatory.—Apostolical Succession.—The Seven Sacraments.—Suggestive, not Dogmatic Teaching.—The Peace-maker.—Foundation of his Teaching.—His Position with regard to Unitarianism.—Lecture on Wordsworth.—Letter in answer to a Criticism, in which he discloses the loneliness of his Heart.—Wordsworth and High-Churchism.—Letter replying to one of the High-Church Party who urged him to unite himself to them.—Increasing Weakness.—Visit to Cheltenham.—His Congregation offers him a Curate.—The Vicar puts a veto on his Choice.—Last Sermons preached in Trinity Chapel, May 29, 1853.

DURING the first few months of 1853, Mr. Robertson seems to have been frequently at Esher, where Lady Byron lived. He had known her almost from the time of his arrival at Brighton, and acquaintance soon passed into a deep and lasting friendship. He said of her that she was one of the noblest and purest women he had ever met. "Her calm, subdued character," he writes, "warm sympathy, and manifold wisdom have been one of my greatest privileges here." He

heard from her the whole history of her life, and she committed into his hands the charge of publishing, after her decease, her memoirs and letters. This was, to her great regret, frustrated by his death. While he lived he sought her sympathy, and always received it. Her friendship gave him new life, and supplied him with strength to conquer his trials.

And, indeed, he needed at this time both sympathy and assistance. He was almost worn out. His state of health was dangerous in the extreme. The annexed letter, written in January, 1853, is a true account of his condition:

January 13, 1853.

To-day I have done little. Titus would have written, "I have lost a day." I prepared for Sunday with little zest and much lassitude of mind, walked with S—, read the newspaper, and scarcely any thing else besides. It is strange how much more loss I feel in me of life's vital force than a year or two ago; it seems a tortoise existence; the truth of which *simile* you will appreciate, if you remember that the pulse of that creature beats about once to twenty pulsations of our blood, and every function of his nature, walking, etc., is performed in the slowest way, as if existence were dragged out.

Already the disease which slew him began to declare itself plainly. Loss of the old power and of quickness in thinking; the necessity for a laborious exercise of will in order to stimulate thought, and appalling exhaustion after such an effort, were some of the first symptoms. It is sad to see that a change in the day appointed for his lecture on Wordsworth was sufficient to throw him into mental confusion; that his memory, which once could retain for years together the order of his reasoning and thinking on any subject, was now so far enfeebled that the whole work of his lecture had to be done over again. Torturing pains in the back of his head and neck, as if an eagle were rending there with its talons, made life dreadful to him. During Monday, Tuesday, and the greater part of Wednesday in every week, he suffered severely. Alone in his room he lay on the rug, his head resting on the bar of a chair, clenching his teeth to prevent the groans which, even through the sleepless length of solitary nights, the ravaging pain could never draw from his manliness. It is miserable to read, week by week, the records of his advancing illness, and to know that it might have been arrested by the repose which he did not and could not take.

Yet among his discourses of this year are some of the most striking that he ever preached. The sermon on "The Glory of the Virgin Mother" is as original as it is remarkable for the new method in which he proposed to treat the subjects of controversy between our Church and that of Rome. He intended that it should be the first of a series in which the

positive truths underlying the Roman Catholic errors should be brought into clear light. This plan he would have carried out with the help of the first two of the principles which he lays down himself as characteristic of his teaching. I quote the whole of the passage (numbering the principles, for the sake of clearness), as important for a just comprehension of his writings:

The principles on which I have taught :

First. The establishment of positive truth, instead of the negative destruction of error. Secondly. That truth is made up of two opposite propositions, and not found in a *via media* between the two. Thirdly. That spiritual truth is discerned by the spirit, instead of intellectually in propositions; and, therefore, Truth should be taught suggestively, not dogmatically. Fourthly. That belief in the Human character of Christ's Humanity must be antecedent to belief in His Divine origin. Fifthly. That Christianity, as its teachers should, works from the inward to the outward, and not *vice versâ*. Sixthly. The soul of goodness in things evil.

On the first of these the whole of his controversial teaching was founded. By the formula of the second he evolved the positive truth with which he confronted the errors he opposed. The best illustration which can be given of the working of this method is his examination of the Roman Catholic doctrine of the adoration of the Virgin in the sermon mentioned above. A slight note supplies the information that it was his intention to have applied this method of analysis to all the Roman Catholic dogmas. The passage is as follows:

Purgatory, Mariolatry, Absolution, Apostolical Succession, Seven sacraments instead of two, Transubstantiation, Baptismal Regeneration, Invocation of saints—each is based upon a truth; but crystallized into form, petrified into dogmas, they are false. Endeavor to trace the meaning contained in Romish institutions; do not meet them with anathemas. Discover what the Roman Catholic means, translate to him his longing, interpret to him what he wants. I can conceive no more blessed work than this for the man of large heart and clear, vigorous intellect.

The sermons on Baptism and Absolution are also elaborate examples of the way in which he performed this work.

From notes, with which I have been supplied, of conversations with him, other instances of his application of this method are extracted.

On the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, he says:

In opposition to the Dissenting view, it *is* Christ's body and blood received; in opposition to the Romanists' view, it *is not* Christ's body and blood to those who receive it unworthily. We do not go between the two. Each of these opposite statements of the Dissenter or of the Roman Catholic are truths, and we retain them. It is not merely bread and wine; it is, spiritually, Christ's body and blood: God present spiritually, not materially, to those who receive

it worthily—*i. e.*, to the faithful. It is not Christ's body and blood to those on whose feelings and conduct it does not tell.

It is well known that he went further than this. He held, with our Church, that the Sacrifice of Christ was once offered and no more. But he held, also, that ultra-Protestantism missed the truth contained in transubstantiation; that that sacrifice is repeated daily, in a spiritual manner, in the hearts of all faithful people. The Romanist is right in the principle—wrong in his application of the principle. The Sacrifice of Christ is forever going on, but not in the sacrifice of the Mass.

He met the doctrine of Purgatory as follows:

The ultra-Protestant utterly denies it. But the law of the universe is progress. Is there no more pain for the redeemed? Is there nothing good in store for the bad? We ask ourselves such questions when we observe the large class of human beings who are neither heavenly nor damnable. We know here that affliction and pain soften some, while they harden others, as heat, which softens iron, hardens clay. We are told that as men die so they rise. Some few die ripe for the presence of God; others, as in the case of the Pharisees, to whom good appeared only as Satanic evil, need only go on to find, as Milton has expressed it, "myself is hell." But, in the case of the first class mentioned, does not analogy make it more than conceivable that their pain should be remedial, not penal? Here, then, we have the principle of purgatory. I have stated this hypothetically; the Roman Catholic states it as a dogma. Our fate is decided here. This is said rigorously by the ultra-Protestant. *So it is*; there is the Protestant truth. The Romanist states the opposite truth, and says, "Our destiny is determined beyond the grave." So long as either is a positive statement of a truth, it is right; but the moment either denies the truth of the other it becomes falsehood.

Mr. Robertson, as may be seen from his instance of the Pharisees, was not a Universalist in doctrine, however he may have hoped that Universalism was true. "My only difficulty," he once said to a friend, "is how not to believe in everlasting punishment."

With regard to the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, he says, using the principle given above:

There is an Apostolical Succession. It is not the power of God conveyed by physical contact—it is not a line of priests; it is a succession of prophets—a broken, scattered one, but a real one. John was the successor of Elias's spirit. In the spiritual birth Luther was the offspring of the mind of St. Paul. Mind acts on mind, whether by ideas or character: herein is the spiritual succession.

He made use of the same principle in speaking of the Romish doctrine of Seven Sacraments:

The Roman Catholic has seven sacraments; we have but two. We can rise to a higher truth than either. The sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, are representative symbols. One day was set apart to sanctify all time; one tribe to make all the nation holy; one nation to make the whole world the kingdom of God. In this way the race was educated. On the same principle God has divinely ordained two material acts, to represent

the truth that all nature is holy when every thing in it reveals His sacredness to men : that all acts are holy when done in the spirit of Christ. Water, the simplest element, represents the sacredness and awfulness of all things. By the consecration of the commonest act of life—a meal—every act is made holy. By the extension of these symbols from two to seven, we really limit their meaning—we say that seven *alone* are holy ; but when we retain only one *element*, and one *act* as set apart to be holy by Christ, we see in these symbols the statement of two universal truths—that all the material universe and all acts ought to be holy to the Lord.

This argument, which has been condensed out of many scattered hints, he closes thus :

The Protestant truth is that two symbols only are ecclesiastically set apart ; the Roman Catholic truth is that many more than these are channels of divine communication to our spirits. These two views make up the whole truth. The Protestant falsehood is limiting to these two the grace (here meaning a strong and vivid impression) of God ; the Romanist falsehood is the negation of the Protestant truth : these two are not the only ecclesiastical sacraments—there are five more ; by which assertion he has got into superstition, and lost the universal meaning of the sacraments.

The third principle of his teaching, that spiritual truth is discerned by the spirit, and not intellectually in propositions, pervades all his writings, and is especially laid down in a sermon preached in this year, 1853, on “The Good Shepherd,” in a passage beginning, “The Son of Man claims to himself the name of Shepherd,” etc. He believed that the highest truths were poetry—to be felt, not proved ; resting *ultimately*, not on the authority of the Bible or the Church, but on that witness of God’s Spirit in the heart of man which is to be realized, not through the cultivation of the understanding, but by the loving obedience of the heart. Therefore his own personal teaching was suggestive, not dogmatic. He did not choose his text in order to wring a doctrine out of it, but he penetrated to its centre, and seized the principle it contained. It was the kernel, not the shell, for which he cared. He taught no schemes of doctrine. His thoughts could not flow in cut channels, but only, like a river, livingly, and “at their own sweet will.” Owing to this, he never became the leader of a sect or the follower of any religious school. He stood aside from all parties, and yet, standing aside, he was formed to be the reconciler and uniter of parties.

While he sternly denounced moral evil, he was tolerant of intellectual error ; while he spoke severely against the bigotry of sects, he conciliated minor differences of opinion. His peculiarly receptive character, which reflected what was good as naturally as a calm lake reflects its shores ; his intuitive grasp of truth ; his large love, which felt all that was real in men, formed, unconsciously to himself, a common ground

where divided parties might unite. Starting from different points, they found a centre in him. They found all that was good in them acknowledged and brought out by him into clearer prominence; and in their satisfaction grew tolerant of the errors and quick to recognize the truths which others taught. For he represented to men not sharp, distinct outlines of doctrine, but the fullness and depth of the spirit of Christianity, which, allowing, in his view, of outward difference of opinion, united men by a pervasive spirit of love to Christ and to one another. He thus became the peace-maker.

This was the great work of his life. But it was hindered and stifled at Brighton by the opposition and the factiousness of his professional brethren, who could neither see the meaning of his life nor the signs of the times. But since his death this aspect of his work has been advancing into prominence. He can not be claimed especially by any one of our conflicting parties. But all thoughtful men, however divided in opinion, find in his writings a point of contact. He has been made one of God's instruments to preserve the unity of the Christian Church in this country, and to avert the vagrancy of mind and the loss of working power which are the natural results of schism. For, instead of by violent dogmatic teaching promoting mutual rancor, and therefore uselessness, he taught principles which established mutual love, and therefore practical usefulness for Christ. This will be the main result of his life upon this age.

But, though his teaching was more suggestive than dogmatic, he did not shrink from meeting in the pulpit the difficulties involved in many of the doctrines of the English Church. His explanations of the Atonement: of the way in which Christ suffered, being tempted; of the doctrine of sin; of the doctrine of the sacraments; of absolution; of imputed righteousness; of the freedom of the Gospel in contrast to the bondage of the Law—have solved the difficulties of many. He believed himself that they were true solutions. But he also believed that the time might come when they would cease to be adequate solutions. He recognized that the solution which was fitting for one age might be unfitting for another; that his solutions were, perhaps, only grounds for more comprehensive ones. This is another reason why he never founded a school. He would not say, "My explanations are final," for he looked forward to an advance of the Christian Church, not into new truths, but into wider or more tolerant views of those old truths which in themselves are incapable of change.

Yet, notwithstanding all this—which men called while he lived, and now when he is dead will call, want of a clear and defined system of theology—he had a fixed basis for his teaching. It was the divine-human Life of Christ. This is the fourth principle mentioned in his letter, “that belief in the human character of Christ must be antecedent to belief in His divine origin.” He felt that an historical Christianity was absolutely essential; that only through a visible life of the Divinest in the flesh could God become intelligible to men; that Christ was God’s idea of our nature realized; that only when we fall back upon the glorious portrait that has been, can we be delivered from despair of Humanity; that in Christ “all the blood of all the nations ran, and all the powers of man were redeemed.” Therefore he grasped, as the highest truth on which to rest life and thought, the reality expressed in the words, “The Word was made flesh.” The Incarnation was to him the centre of all history, the blossoming of Humanity. The Life which followed the Incarnation was the explanation of the life of God, and the only solution of the problem of the life of man. He did not speak much of loving Christ; his love was fitly mingled with that veneration which makes love perfect; his voice was solemn, and he paused before he spoke His name in common talk; for what that Name meant had become the central thought of his intellect, and the deepest realization of his spirit. He had spent a world of study, of reverent meditation, of adoring contemplation on the Gospel history. Nothing comes forward more visibly in his letters than the way in which he had entered into the human life of Christ. To that every thing is referred—by that every thing is explained. The gossip of a drawing-room, the tendencies of the time, the religious questions of the day, especially the Sabbath question, the loneliness and the difficulties of his work, were not so much argued upon or combated, as at once and instinctively brought to the test of a Life which was lived out eighteen centuries ago, but which went everywhere with him. Out of this intuitive reception of Christ, and from this ceaseless silence of meditation which makes the blessedness of great love, there grew up in him a deep comprehension of the whole, as well as a minute sympathy with all the delicate details of the character of Christ. Day by day, with passionate imitation, he followed his Master, musing on every action, revolving in thought the inter-dependence of all that Christ had said or done, weaving into the fibres of his heart the principles of the Life he worshipped, till he had received into his being the very impression and

image of that unique Personality. His very doctrines were the Life of Christ expressed in words. The Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection of Christ were not dogmas to him. In himself he was daily realizing them. They were in him a life, a power, a light. This was his Christian consciousness.

Out of this study and reception of the Humanity arose his conviction of the Divinity of Christ.

The following striking passage, from an unpublished sermon, is very characteristic of his teaching on this subject. It establishes a *method* of arriving at a conviction of the Divinity of the Son of Man, which, were it oftener employed, were well. I know one, at least, whom this view has saved from Unitarianism.

Christ was the Son of God. But remember in what sense He ever used this name—Son of God because Son of Man. He claims Sonship in virtue of His Humanity. Now, in the whole previous revelation through the Prophets, etc., one thing was implied—only through man can God be known; only through a perfect man, perfectly revealed. Hence He came, “the brightness of His Father’s glory, the *express image* of His person.” Christ then must be loved as Son of Man before He can be adored as Son of God. In personal love and adoration of Christ the Christian religion consists, not in correct morality, or in correct doctrines, but in a homage to the King.

Now, unquestionably, the belief in the Divinity of Christ is waning among us. They who hold it have petrified it into a theological dogma without life or warmth, and thoughtful men are more and more beginning to put it aside. How are we then to get back this belief in the Son of God? by authority or by the old way of persecution? The time for these has passed. The other way is to begin at the beginning. Begin as the Bible begins, with Christ the Son of Man. Begin with Him as God’s character revealed under the limitations of humanity. Lay the foundations of a higher faith deeply in a belief of His Humanity. See Him as He was. Breathe His Spirit. After that, try to comprehend His Life. Enter into His Childhood. Feel with Him when he looked round about Him in anger, when he vindicated the crushed woman from the powerless venom of her ferocious accusers; when he stood alone in the solitary Majesty of Truth in Pilate’s judgment-hall; when the light of the Roman soldiers’ torches flashed on Kedron in the dark night, and He knew that watching was too late; when His heart-strings gave way upon the Cross. Walk with Him through the Marriage Feast. See how the sick and weary came to Him instinctively; how men, when they saw Him, felt their sin, they knew not why, and fell at His feet; how guilt unconsciously revealed itself, and all that was good in men was drawn out, and they became higher than themselves in His presence. Realize this. Live with Him till He becomes a living thought—ever present—and you will find a reverence growing up which compares with nothing else in human feeling. You will feel that a slighting word spoken of Him wounds with a dart more sharp than personal insult. You will feel that to bow at the name of Jesus is no form at will of others, but a relief and welcome. And if it should ever chance that, finding yourself thrown upon your own self, and cut off from sects—suspected, in quest of a truth which no man gives—then that wondrous sense of strength and friendship comes—the being alone with Christ, with the strength of a manlier independence. Slowly, then, this almost insensibly merges into ado-



ration. For what is it to adore Christ? To call Him God; to say Lord, Lord? No. Adoration is the mightiest love the soul can give—call it by what name you will. Many a Unitarian, as Channing, has adored, calling it only admiration; and many an orthodox Christian, calling Christ God with most accurate theology, has given him only a cool intellectual homage.

It will be seen from this with what wisdom and toleration he spoke of the Unitarians without surrendering an iota of his own faith. With the violent, bigoted, and unspiritual portion of their school he had no sympathy; but with those who occupied a higher region he had much sympathy, and to them he owed much. He read James Martineau's books with pleasure and profit. The influence of "The Endeavors after a Christian Life" can be traced through many of his sermons. Theodore Parker he admired for the eloquence, earnestness, learning, and indignation against evil, and against forms without a spirit, which mark his writings. But he deprecated the want of reverence and the rationalizing spirit of Parker.

He revered and spoke of Dr. Channing as one of the noblest and truest Christians of America. He was deeply indebted to his writings. He read them carefully, and borrowed from them largely. He spoke with indignation against those who would un-Christianize Channing, because in words he denied the coequal divinity of Christ with the Father. He said, if the deepest love is the deepest worship, no man adored Christ more sincerely than Channing. He would have been more amused than hurt at the accusation brought against him after his death, that in praising Channing he was praising a Socinian. He would have said, to call Channing a Socinian is like calling Fichte a materialistic Pantheist. He would have replied to the insinuation that he had a tendency to Unitarianism because he admired Channing, that on the same grounds he might be said to have a tendency to Roman Catholicism because he admired Pascal, or a tendency to believe in particular redemption because he studied and revered Jonathan Edwards.

The truth is, that he recognized the value of Unitarianism up to a certain point. To the Unitarians had been committed the task of exhibiting more fully than others the truth of the Humanity of Christ. But while receiving with thankfulness their full declaration of this truth, he could not *remain* with them on their platform. Comprehending with great clearness and sympathy their stand-point, he was able to distinctly realize its want. He felt that if Christianity were to become a universal power among men—if Human Nature were ever to be entirely ennobled, there must be added to

the Humanity of Christ the Divinity of Christ. Nor was he content with merely saying "Christ must be divine, because I *feel* he must be so." Contrary to his usual custom, he brings argument to bear upon the doctrine, and endeavors to prove it in his lectures on the Corinthians, and in several of his sermons.

With regard to the two other principles which he mentions, "that Christianity, as its teachers should, works from the inward to the outward," and "that there is a soul of goodness in things evil," no comment is required, for the first runs through every thing he wrote and spoke, and the second ruled his life, his estimate of men, and his action upon them, as well as his view of the world, of history, and of nature.

The importance, not of explaining his doctrines, but of presenting a concentrated view of the principles of his teaching, may excuse the apparent irrelevancy of his digression.

On February 10, he delivered a lecture upon Wordsworth. It had been promised in the August of the previous year. He had then written a rough sketch of what he might possibly attempt.

The Athenæum people have again asked me to give them a lecture—this time in place of James Anderson, who can not come, from some domestic affliction. I am rather tempted to comply. A subject is part of the difficulty, however. Two have occurred to me—"The Influence of Fiction," and "Wordsworth, his Life and Poetry." This would be a large one, as it would require an investigation into the influences of the French Revolution on his mind in youth, both in its generous spirit and in its reaction. It would lead to the question how a life is to be led true to the idea of each man's own character, of which rare case Wordsworth is a remarkable example. It would bring in, too, the question of how far rhythm is essential to poetry, and what is its influence, besides the main object of the whole—Wordsworth's principles of poetry, faults, and excellences.

In the first page of his lecture he lays down his plan of treatment :

In order to treat fully the subject which I have to bring before you this evening, I believe there are three points to which I ought principally to direct your attention. The first is, the qualifications necessary for appreciating poetry in general, and for appreciating the poetry of Wordsworth in particular. The second is, the character and life of Wordsworth, so far as they bear upon his poetry, and so far as they may have been supposed to have formed or modified his peculiar poetical theories and principles. The third point is, the theories and poetical principles of Wordsworth, and how far they are true, how far they have been exaggerated, and how far Wordsworth has himself worked out the principles he has laid down.

The last, as he says, was the most important point of all—the subject ; but the second lecture, in which this was to be treated, was never delivered, owing to his increasing weakness.

The published lecture on Wordsworth is not so generally appreciated as the two lectures on poetry, partly because Wordsworth belongs to the few and not to the many, and partly because it wants Mr. Robertson's corrections. But it is a true and thoughtful review of Wordsworth's life, character, and work; and a fine defense of the Poet against the vulgar accusations of egotism and inconsistency. It has a further interest, as all that Mr. Robertson said has, in being more or less a revelation of his own character and heart. The qualifications he lays down as necessary for comprehending the poetry of Wordsworth were his own qualifications—"unworldliness;" and the more he lived the more he learnt to protest, and to act out his protest, that the spirit of the world was more destructive of a Christian life than even sin itself—"feelings disciplined by nature;" and all his life-long he endeavored to free himself from conventional views of art and beauty, and to keep his heart natural and pure enough to receive impressions direct from Nature, and to see her as she is—"feelings disciplined through the minds of the great masters and poets;" and if there was one thing pre-eminent in his character, it was the beautiful and child-like reverence which he gave to those who were worthy, and his hatred of the unvenerating flippancy of modern criticism—"a certain delicacy and depth of feeling;" and the depth, subtlety, and gossamer strength of his feeling, is that which chiefly appears in his writings, as well in his keen analysis of the feelings of others as in his morbid analysis of his own. He had another qualification, in that the passionate enthusiasm of his early days had given place to a calmer and sterner view of life; in that Feeling was no longer dominant in him, but Will; and Wordsworth is the poet of calm, and not of passion. He also felt deep sympathy with that want of the sense of the ridiculous in Wordsworth which made all the world, even to its meanest things, a consecrated world. "The ludicrous now rarely troubles me," he says: "all is awful."

He sympathized also with the variations of Wordsworth's heart between democracy and aristocracy. "Wordsworth's tastes," he says, "were all on the side of conservatism, his convictions all on that of democracy. Such a man, when it comes to the vulgarities of life, shrinks from democracy—expects that all shall be as lofty as himself. Wordsworth was too fastidious. The only remedy was less contemplative and theoretical life, and more work among the workers."

The last portion of the lecture, in which he dilates on Wordsworth's love of England as the guardian of liberty,

was written out of his own heart. Robertson was a man whose patriotism was based, not on the "blind hysterics" of feeling, but on the faith that England was the witness to the world of the glory of duty fulfilled even to death—of freedom poised between Conservatism and Liberalism—of truth in business and purity in domestic life. His voice, when it most truly expressed his devotion in England, would have said of her:

I could not love thee, Dear, so much,  
Loved I not honor more.

The following are the only passages in his letters which relate to this lecture :

January 25.

I have no journals of books read, or thoughts matured, to send you; for my whole journal has been thinking—thinking—thinking about Wordsworth. I wish I had written the lecture, but I had not time; it takes so long in the mere act of penmanship. It is all in my brain somehow or other; whether it will come out orderly or tremblingly, I do not know. Then there is the question whether health or strength will be such as to give a command of words, and these two questions make the whole experiment a hazardous one. However, I must shut my eyes and harden my heart, as they say to boys riding over their first leap. When you get this it will be all over. Is it not curious how involuntarily one uses language concerning such a task which would be applicable to some terrible surgical operation? I do hate, detest, and abhor, as the oath of royalty runs, all speechifying and all publicity.

I am not writing with zest, but it is only that wretchlessness—an old expressive English word extant in the Thirty-nine Articles—which comes from the tension of nerve in preparing for a lecture and delivering sermons.

I am becoming of opinion that no duty whatever has a right to interfere with a human existence. I am not myself on these days; I can see nothing in its true light, but all through a veil of black crape. This has now lasted ever since the Wednesday of that unfortunate postponement. It makes one selfish, and fastens attention upon the slow succession of ignoble sufferings within—hour by hour, minute by minute, wearing, wearing, wearing.

Owing to some difficulty about the room, his lecture was postponed. He writes :

February 8.

The morning was occupied in a vain effort to work up my Wordsworth thoughts; for it is a mixed work—parts of the old thoughts coming in scraps to the recollection, and badly joining themselves with the fresh thought of the present, so that no consistent living whole is formed—the result of thought working itself out of thought—or rather a building made up by the fragments of an old building, clumsily worked into the masonry of to-day. It is a patchwork of memory and excogitation—neither wholly, and both incompletely. The laws of mind are very curious. How dissimilar those two operations of creating and remembering! and no joinership, however dexterous, can bring the edges together, so that the lines of junction shall not be seen.

February 11.

One line to tell you that my lecture went off last night successfully—that is, I did not break down, and preserved self-possession throughout; the room a perfect cram, and hundreds went away; but I have been suffering

from severe pain in the head ever since—shooting thrills so sharp and sudden that I can scarcely forbear an exclamation. Whether people liked it or not, I do not know; and if I could only get rid of these stabs in the brain every ten minutes, I should not care. Two lights with reflectors were placed on the table, glaring in my face all the time, which prevented my seeing any body. There was little or no applause, except now and then a low murmur; but, on the whole, I was glad of this, for the worst acknowledgment that can be made of an instructive lecture is to clap, and I think they showed their good taste. At the same time, it partly arose from my own rapidity, and, I trust, from the absence of any of those sentences constructed for clap-trap, which any public speaker at all practised can easily fabricate. One or two passages having reference to the invasion expected in 1802, connected with the reading of Wordsworth's sonnets on the subject, were the only points in the lecture that seemed to wake up any audible response from the audience.

The "South Church Union" criticised the lecture, alleging that it favored Pantheism, and misrepresented High-Churchism. Mr. Robertson replied in the following letter. Along with the criticism there were some innuendoes which induced him to write the latter portion of his letter. It was not like his usual practice to lay himself thus open to the public. He had borne misrepresentation and attack so long in silence, that such a sudden unveiling of his heart in the columns of a newspaper is startling. It reads as if it had been wrung from him against his will—as if he knew that it was for the last time—as if he had thought, "For once they shall know what their intolerance has done."

March 4, 1853.

SIR,—In the columns of the "Brighton Guardian," denominated the "South Church Union Chronicle," I see some strictures on certain expressions attributed to me in my lecture upon Wordsworth. With the tone of the strictures, excepting one sentence which I regret, not for my own sake, for it is untrue, but for the writer's sake, for it is rude and coarse—I can find no fault. The whole criticism, however, is based on a misconception. It proceeds on the assumption that I complained with blame that—

"High-Churchism regarded with peculiar reverence a sanctity as connected with certain places, times, acts, and persons," etc.

I did not use those words. That was not my definition of High-Churchism, and to have condemned it as so defined would have contradicted my argument, for I was actually at the moment justifying Wordsworth, who is well known to have entertained such feelings. Had I so spoken, I should have condemned a feeling of the *relative* sanctity of such things—a feeling which I comprehend too entirely to have any inclination to interfere with.

What I did say was as follows:

"The tendency of Pantheism is to see the godlike everywhere, the personal God nowhere. The tendency of High-Churchism is to localize the personal Deity in certain consecrated places, called churches; certain consecrated times called Sabbaths, fast-days, and so forth; certain consecrated acts, sacramental and quasi sacramental; certain consecrated persons, called priests."

I endeavored to show that the *tendency* is not necessarily the error; and that there are High-Churchmen, like Wordsworth, who recognize in such places, persons, and acts a sanctity only relative, and not intrinsic—relative

to the worshippers, without localizing or limiting Deity in or to the acts, times, or places; the Pantheistic and High-Church tendencies, each false alone, balancing each other in the particular case of such men.

I have no intention of entering into controversy on this point; and I should, according to my hitherto invariable practice, have left both the misrepresentation and the criticism unnoticed, were it not that the words, as they stand, if used by me, would have evidenced an unworthy desire of turning aside from my subject to pander to the passions of my audience, and seeking a miserable popularity by an attempt to feed that theological rancor which is the most detestable phase of the religion of the day.

I do not merely say that I was not guilty of this paltry work. I say it is simply impossible to me. To affirm, whatever may be taught by our savage polemics, whether Tractarian or Evangelical, that the new commandment is NOT this—"that ye hate one another," and that discipleship to Christ is proved more by the intensity of love for good than by the vehemence of bitterness against error, is with me a desire too deep, too perpetual, and too unsatisfied to have allowed the possibility of my joining even for one moment in the cowardly cry with which the terrors and the passions of the half-informed are lashed by platform rhetoric into hatred of High-Churchmen.

I acknowledge the courtesy of the attack on myself, and admit that in all attacks from the High-Church side I have ever met, and expect beforehand to meet, generous, fair, gentleman-like, and Christian antagonism.

At the same time, I could not help smiling good-humoredly at the writer's utter misconception of my aims, views, and position. If he think that what he calls a philosophic height above contending parties is a position which any man can select for his own comfort and retirement, he miscalculates greatly. If he supposes that the desire to discern the "soul of goodness in things evil," to recognize the truth which lies at the root of error, and to assimilate the good in all sects and all men rather than magnify the evil, is a plan which will conciliate the regard of all, secure a man's own peace, "and of course bring with it great popularity with the multitude," I can earnestly assure the writer that, whenever he will try the experiment, he will find out his mistake. He will, perhaps, then see a new light reflected upon the expression, "when I speak of peace, they make them ready for the battle." He will find himself, to his painful surprise, charged on the one side for his earnestness with heresy, and on the other for his charity with latitudinarianism. His desire to exalt the spirit will be construed into irreverence for the letter, his setting light by maxims in a want of zeal for principles, his distinction between rules and spirit into lawlessness. He will find his attempt to love men, and his yearnings for their sympathy, met by suspicions of his motives and malignant slanders upon his life; his passionate desire to reach ideas instead of words, and get to the root of what men mean, he will find treated, even by those who think that they are candid, as the gratification of a literary taste and the affectation of philosophic height above the strife of human existence. I would not recommend him to try that "philosophic height" which he thinks so self-indulgent, unless he has the hardihood to face the keenest winds that blow over all lonely places, whether lonely heights or lonely flats. If he can steel his heart against distrust and suspicion; if he can dare to be pronounced dangerous by the ignorant, hinted at by his brethren in public and warned against in private; if he can resolve to be struck on every side and not strike again, giving all quarter and asking none; if he can struggle in the dark with the prayer for light of Ajax on his lips, in silence and alone—then let him adopt the line which seems so easy, and be fair and generous and chivalrous to all. But if he expects from it, "of course considerable self-applause and great popularity with the multitude," I can tell him they are not the rewards of *that* path. Rather let him be content to remain a partisan, and call

himself by some name, Churchman, Evangelical, or Tractarian. Then he will be abused by many; but his party will defend him.

His definition of High-Churchism called forth further remonstrance. One of his friends wrote to him upon the subject. He replied :

MY DEAR —,—I gratefully accept your hint about the definition of High-Churchmanship. I will modify what I said, to prevent misunderstanding. At the same time, as High-Churchmanship, in the sense in which I was then speaking, is, in my view, an error, I must represent it in its most developed, not in its modified form, and as the exact opposite of Pantheism. All grand truth is the statement of two opposites, not a *via media* between them nor either of them alone. I conceive Wordsworth to have held both—the Personality of the Eternal Being, and also His diffusion through space. Now I can not conceal my conviction that the vice of High-Churchism is in its *tendency* to exaggerate the former of these, by localizing Deity in acts, places, etc. It is the vice of Pantheism to hold the latter alone.

When a High-Churchman fully recognizes the latter, as Wordsworth did, I care little for any trifling exaggerations of the former, and I will always fight for him, and maintain that his High-Churchism has no radical error in it, even though his *expressions* may to my mind seem to predicate locality of God much more than I should like to do it. But when he represents Personality as a limitation to time, space, acts, etc., instead of recognizing it in three essential points, all metaphysical, and super-sensual, viz., consciousness, will, character—then I must earnestly and firmly oppose High-Churchism, and say that its tendency is to localize, and I must quote anxiously those texts which, taken alone, have a Pantheistic sound. “Højybeit, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Heaven is my throne; Earth is my footstool: what house will ye build for me?”

And indeed I do think that this is a very common and very dangerous tendency. I will modify my definition by saying it is the *tendency* of High-Churchism. That it is not inseparable from it, I showed by defending Wordsworth. High-Churchism I hate. High-Churchmen, many of them, I love, admire, and sympathize with.

The former of these two letters seems to have touched and excited some of the nobler spirits among the High-Church party. One of them wrote to him, urging him to unite himself to them, and drew from him the following reply, most valuable as the latest utterance of his convictions on many points of interest :

60 Montpelier Road, Brighton, April 1, 1853.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your cordial and welcome letter. It is a joy to meet with any testimony to the veraciousness of a ministry beset with disappointments, and to read in such testimonies a prophecy of a coming day when we shall understand at least what each other means.

To the main question of your letter, respecting the duty of union—that is, professed and active union with men whose earnestness is acknowledged—and the apparent unreasonableness of standing aloof and alone, it would take many sheets to reply adequately.

It is my belief that in all the tenets and practices of the High-Church body there is an underlying truth; but then I confess that I should find as much difficulty in using their *forms* of statement in many points, as I should in using those of the Evangelicals in all points. With a thoughtful and large-

minded High-Churchman I believe I should sympathize more than with one of any section of the Church; but my recoil from the bare formalism of the half-educated and half-spiritualized of that school would, I fear, be stronger than from the extremes of any other party.

Spirit is eternal—form is transient; and when men stereotype the form and call it perpetual, or deny that under other and very different forms the self-same truths may lie (as the uncovering of Moses' feet is identically the same as our uncovering our heads—ay, and I will even dare to say, often with the *covering* of the Quakers, when reverence for God is the cause for each), then I feel repelled at once, whether the form be a form of words or a form of observance.

To announce spiritual religion, as Christ announced it to the woman of Samaria, independent of place, on this mountain or that—as Stephen announced it when they stoned him for blaspheming the temple—this, I think, is the great work of a Christian minister in these days. He will joyfully recognize a reverence for the Invisible in the even exaggerated zeal with which good men, afraid of Rationalism, Pantheism, Germanism, and a hundred other things, strive to confine a sacredness to churches, rites, offices; but he can not and will not join such efforts to preserve spiritual religion, because he knows by the experience of history in what they must inevitably end. He knows that the attempt to be independent of form is a vain effort for beings encased in flesh and blood, and in a world which is the great form by which God has manifested Himself. But, at the same time, he must feel that the special Church forms are only valuable as a protest for the Eternal Presence in and through all forms to the spirit that loves Him, and he will dread all attempts to limit and confine God's grace and presence to any authoritative forms, however time-honored.

Now, only giving these feelings as specimens, how could such a man join a party? He would soon be saying things which would make him a black sheep among them, every now and then protesting against their extremes with vehemence that would make him look like a renegade. What would he have gained by union? For himself and for others—nothing.

Unless a man has a skin like a rhinoceros, and a heart like a stone-fruit, it is no easy thing to work alone; the bad feelings of pride or vanity get as little to feed them in such a struggle as the better ones of sympathy and charity—and Elijah, stern and iron as he was, should be a warning to any common man to expect that many a day he will have to sit under his juniper-tree in despondency and bitter sense of isolation and uselessness.

Nevertheless it is my conviction that for some minds there is no other path open; they must speak such truth as is in them fearlessly and uncompromisingly, pleasing no mortal ear on purpose. They must try—not by eclecticism, but by a true application (not the Tractarian) of the canon, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*—to discern the one truth which lies beneath various apparently antagonistic forms, as Cuvier discerned the fossil types of organization in things so diverse as leaves and lungs, tortoise-shells and human skeletons.

If God would raise up some man of rare largeness of heart and brain to do this work, and tell us what is the truth in each case which makes good men cleave to the error so tenaciously, a grand work of union might perhaps be accomplished, such as no "Protestant Defense Associations" nor "South Church Unions" ever can accomplish; for all that they can do is to win a triumph for their party, and none of them will venture to say that their party contains all the liege men of the truth.

For a man or a body of men to do this I earnestly long and yearn; and in the absence of such large-hearted and largely-gifted men, I persist in trying, in my small blundering way, to do it for a few who will be candid enough to



interpret what I mean. I believe the path in which I work is the true pass across the mountains, though the thought and the hand of the master-engineer are wanting to make it a road broad and safe for the people and the multitude to travel in; but that is not my fault or blame. God will provide His own workmen. I think I see how the work should be done, but I have neither the qualifications nor the strength to do it; but I can at least be faithful to my convictions and limited task, and I have cheerfully counted the cost, and have as cheerfully, for the most part, paid it.

This is a long letter; but I think the frankness of yours demands to be met with equal frankness.

It is really time now, after eighteen centuries, that we should get some better conception than we have of what Christianity is. If we could but comprehend the manifested life of God, Christ in His earthly career, how He looked on things, and felt and thought, what He hated and what He pitied, we might have some chance of agreement. As it is, I suppose we shall go on biting and devouring one another, and thinking—alas for the mockery!—that we have realized a kingdom of God upon earth.

To understand the Life and Spirit of Christ appears to me to be only the chance of remedy; but we have got doctrines about Christ, instead of Christ, and we call the bad metaphysics of Evangelicalism “the Gospel,” and the temporary transient forms of Tractarianism “the Church.”

To know Him, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings—that is all in all; and if the death and life of Christ are working in a man, he is our brother, whether Tractarian or Evangelical, if we could but believe that very simple proposition.

I remain yours faithfully,

F. W. R.

Shortly after the unusual exertion of the lecture on Wordsworth, he suddenly fainted in the street.

April 4.

During the day, while walking with J. Young, in West Street, on my way to the Training-School, I fainted and fell. My first sensation, on coming to myself, was that of being conscious of voices around me, and I knew instantly that a crowd had gathered, though I had not in that hundredth part of a second opened my eyes. They tell me I leaped to my feet as if shot; I went a few steps into a shop, and fainted quite off into unconsciousness a second time; then came intense pain in the back of the head, which lasted for three hours. However, to avoid making a sensation, I went out to dinner, keeping my engagement; but it saved me nothing, for the fact is duly pilloried in the “Brighton Gazette” this morning, and my bell has rung with inquiries half a dozen times already.

This warned him that there was more radical mischief in his weakness and pain than he had thought; and, urged by his physicians, he consented to go to Cheltenham for rest. In April he writes:

On Monday I go to Cheltenham. Severe and bewildering pain in the cerebellum has for the last few days made work dangerous. Dr. Allen's view exactly corroborates my anticipations; the only difficulty is, that the pain is not in the region of the intellectual organs, but in that of the sensational and affectional. When it moves forward I know that the paroxysm is ending, and then it never attains a sensation more vivid than that as of warm water occupying the interior of the head and forehead. The decline in mental power, and the entire incapacitation at times of some functions, and the severe pain

produced by the attempt to exercise them, force me to look at the matter now seriously. In Cheltenham I shall ask Dr. Conolly's opinion, if he be there.

While staying in Cheltenham he rallied; but returning, on the third week to Brighton, all the old symptoms reappeared. During his absence several members of his congregation, with thoughtful generosity, subscribed to enable him to engage a curate. He gratefully accepted their kindness, and nominated a gentleman known to them, and a personal friend of his own, the Rev. Ernest Tower.

May 17, 1853.

Mr. Tower has accepted my curacy, and both his father and mother, whose letters I have seen, are pleased. He is a gentleman thoroughly in earnest, hard-working, and attached to me. Our spheres and powers lie in different directions, which will prevent the possibility of collision; and as he will take the afternoon sermon, I shall have leisure for more pastoral work, at the prospect of which I rejoice; for I can not say how humiliated I feel at degenerating into the popular preacher of a fashionable watering-place. In addition to this, he has strong health; so that I shall not have compunction in delegating work to him when I am unfit for it.

These pleasant hopes were disappointed. The Vicar of Brighton, in whose hands the power of a veto lay, exercised his legal right in the most legal manner. Owing to reasons which appear in the correspondence given in the next chapter, he refused to confirm Mr. Robertson's nomination of Mr. Tower. This was on Trinity-Sunday, the 22d of May. On the 29th Mr. Robertson preached without the help he had so long desired; and on the following Sunday, the 5th of June, his voice was heard for the last time in Trinity Chapel. His sermon in the morning was for the Orphan Asylum; the subject was the parable of the Barren Fig-tree—"Then said he to the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" By a strange and sad coincidence, his afternoon lecture was on part of the last chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. The closing sermon of a long course of lectures was also the close of his career. With what a sorrowful force came back upon the memories of his congregation the words which he had read as part of his last text—"Finally, brethren, farewell!" No one who wishes to penetrate, as far as possible, into the solitary manliness and endurance of his life during the last month of his pulpit ministrations, who would understand the suffering and the strength of his nature, the mingling of meekness and noble pride, of self-surrender and high self-confidence, of quiet faith and of an almost triumphant ecstasy of faith, should omit to read the notes of the last three lectures which he delivered on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

I remember seeing on the manuscript of one of these, on "The Thorn in the Flesh," the mark of a tear. It had fallen as he wrote alone in his room.

Self-contained, master of himself, when he could weep in the solitude of his study it was full time that he should be freed from his long sorrow. And God blessed him with Death, the Releaser. In three months after he had spoken of the pain of St. Paul, he entered into the painless land.\*

*Letters from January 5th to May 18th, 1853.*

CXLV.

January 5, 1853.

Last evening I began Benvenuto Cellini's "Life," which I had never read before. What a very strange one, and what a strange time it paints! The murder of a man who had slain Cellini's brother in self-defense is related with the utmost coolness, as well as the way in which Pope Clement VII. connived at it. Certainly, an artist's life does not appear one conducting to moral excellence; Cellini was a most ungovernable, vain, passionate man, unrestrained by any rule except his own feelings; yet he seems to have been an intimate friend of Michael Angelo—a right noble man. If Cellini is to be believed, he killed the Constable Bourbon with his own hand, and almost singly defended the Castle of St. Angelo, besides a number of other wonders, any one of which would be sufficient to make a life famous. His profligacy, too, seems to have been without measure. Such books do not amuse me as they do most people. They set me thinking, and most painfully—bewildering and entangling the skein of life and human destinies hopelessly. In the midst of it all, religion comes in from time to time—and the names of God and Christ as objects of supposed and, I conceive, sincere worship, jarring, however, upon my sense of fitness, like the Messiah between two thieves, as if He had been their accomplice. What is one to make of it all, and how judge of this strange world, which becomes to me more unintelligible every day?

No reply from M—. I shall be glad to go, not only for the sake of the solitude, but also for the exercise, for I begin to feel it once more indispensable, and without delay—for mental restlessness and powerlessness increase to a painful extent. I can not read for ten minutes consecutively, much less think.

CXLVI.

I have just finished Maurice's three sermons on the Crystal Palace question, recently published. As usual, they are the offspring of a capacious mind and large heart. In the main his view is the same as mine, though the statement differs somewhat, as the idiosyncrasies of the two minds differ, and he has brought more thought and more historical learning to the subject by far. Like all he writes, they are exceedingly suggestive, and likely to do more good, I should fancy, in the study than from the pulpit, were it not that these were addressed to a Lincoln's-Inn congregation, which may be supposed to have in it minds trained to habits of consecutive attention. There is matter for thought for hours in these sermons, but most people would read on

\* I have printed at the end of this chapter the letters of 1853 up to the month of June. The remaining letters attached to the following chapter were written, after he had given up public life, during the months of June, July, and August.

from sentence to sentence, and when they turned over the last page and found *finis*, be tempted to exclaim, "But what does he mean? and what is proved?"

CXLVII.

I have just finished writing a sermon for the morning. It is an old subject, from notes, with fresh language, and several fresh thoughts. Somehow I can not originate thought and subjects now as I used. Perhaps it arises from feeling that enthusiasm and affection and trust, and perhaps respect, towards me have cooled, partly from my own fault, partly from the malicious misrepresentations of the Evangelicals, as well as of others. So far as this has chilled the spring of energy, there is something wrong; for energy ought not to arise out of self-respect or the assurance of being heard with sympathy. Yet it is not all wrong even in this respect, for some natures can not do without sympathy, public or private—though perhaps pride, or some other peculiarity, makes them haughtily refuse all common and even the fair methods of securing what the Evangelical books call "acceptance," and what old Aristotle lays down as one of the first things to be acquired, and indispensable to the success of one who addresses masses—namely, the "good-will of the audience," that is, a personal feeling of well-disposedness towards the speaker who is to convince or teach them.

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I am proceeding with Cellini's "Life." What a wonderful picture of human life, and human art, and human society! The *naïve* and inordinate vanity of the man is astonishing, and refutes the foolish popular notion that real talent is never vain, and real courage never boastful. Falstaff's braggadocio is modest in comparison of his. Conceive a man gravely telling you that after the vision in his prison a glory encircled his head through life—visible on his shadow, especially on the dewy grass at morning, and which he possessed the power of showing to a chosen few. And then the religiosity and hymn-writing of a man who records, in admiration, the murder in revenge of three separate persons who had slightly offended him. Very curious, too, is his account of the unblushing rapacity, violence, and profligacy of the Popes Clement and Paul III., to say nothing of the villainy of the cardinals, bishops, and Dukes of Ferrara. It was a curious time when men had to redress their own wrongs, and goldsmiths were compelled to be accomplished swordsmen if they would live one day in safety. Fancy Mr. Lewis armed *cap-à-pie*, or a tailor coming to measure you with a sword on his thigh! Yet a dusky, clouded sense of right, honor, and religion runs through the book: *bizarre* enough, it is true, and suggestive of many reflections. Society progresses—do men? Benvenuto gratified every passion, slashed and slew his way through life. London jewellers wear no swords, and get rich by bankruptcies; is the gain very great? are we not less of men than in those days?

It is a wonderfully graphic life. That power of painting what was seen and what appeared, instead of our modern habit of reflecting and philosophizing upon it, brings the whole scene before the eyes. How living and real, as if of yesterday, the portraits of Francis I., Madame d'Estampes, Titian! And how curious, as compared with Rousseau and Tasso, is Cellini's perpetual discovery of conspiracies against himself, and of the implacable enmities of popes, dukes, ladies! The imaginativeness of a brain, which had in it a fibre of insanity, near which genius often lies, would, I suppose, account for two-thirds of this—and his extraordinary irascibility was but another form of it. An inn-keeper, whose horse he has overridden, keeps his saddle and bridle in retaliation, and Cellini sets off and buries his dagger in the spine of his neck. Another man affronts him slightly, and he resolves to cut off his arm; then his mad escape from prison, with the ingenuity of a maniac; the de-

scent by sheets, curiously procured, cut in strips, and the desperate fall and fractured leg; all to escape from a Pope, who was trying to murder him in the most incredible ways—it is very curious.

CXLVIII.

A letter arrived from — to-day. I did not like the expression in the one you sent me, where she speaks of the sacrifice made for —, and the strengthening effect of sacrifice on the character. It is a bad habit of sentiment to fall into. People who make real sacrifices are never able to calculate self-complacently the good the said sacrifices are doing them; just as people who really grieve are unable at the time to philosophize about the good effects of grief. “Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous.” That is true philosophy. In the lips of one struggling might and main to strengthen character, and living a life of the Cross and of sacrifice, such a sentence as I have quoted might be real; as it is, it is simply unreal—a sentence got by heart, and I think very dangerous. Nothing is more dangerous than the command of a pen which can write correct sentiments, such as might befit a martyr or an angel. And the danger is, that the confusion between a commonplace life and that of an angel or a martyr is hopeless. For when the same sublimities proceed from the lips and pens of both, who is to convince us that we are not beatified martyrs and holy angels? Such a sentence as this would have been more real, though somewhat sentimental still: “How dare I talk of Sacrifice! and, how little of it is there in my life—one perpetual succession of enjoyments!” It has often struck me that Christ never suffered these sentimentalisms to pass without a matter-of-fact testing of what they were worth and what they meant. It is a dangerous facility of fine writing, which—I say it in deep reverence to Him—Christ would have tested by some of those apparently harsh replies which abound in his life, such as to one professing great anxiety to be with Him, saying he wished it and not doing it, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.”

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I only took the morning duty yesterday, being too tired for the second. As I sat inactive in the afternoon listening to Mr. Langdon, and gazing on the dense crowd before me, I felt humbled exceedingly to think I had to address those numbers every week twice, and that their spiritual life depended, for those hours at least, speaking humanly, on me. How wonderful the opportunity, and how heavy the responsibility! In the crush and rush and hurry of work, and the personal anxieties connected with it, such thoughts do not come, except rarely; but when out of harness, and looking, in the dusky light of evening, into the almost solemn darkness, the feeling came painfully. Such feelings, unhappily, evaporate in the dust of life.

CXLIX.

The last hour has been spent in examining a pile of eighteen letters waiting my arrival—some long, none important, two anonymous—one of them from a young lady, defending fashionable society against my tirades; these last I feel are worse than useless, and very impolitic. Nevertheless, more and more, a life of amusement and visiting seems to me in irreconcilable antagonism to Christianity, and more destructive to the higher spirit than even the mercantile life in its worst form; and yet I do not know; who shall say which is the national spirit more surely, inevitably tending to decay—that of the cities of the plain, or that of Tyre and Sidon?

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The austerity that comes *after* life's experience is more healthy, because more natural, than that which begins it. When it begins life it is the pour-

ing of the new wine into the old weak wine-skins, which burst; and the young heart, cheated out of its youth, indemnifies itself by an attempt to realize the feelings which were denied it by a double measure of indulgence in age. An unlovely spectacle! Can any thing be more melancholy than the spectacle of one who is trying to be young, and unable to descend gracefully and with dignity into the vale of years? There is a fine tomb of, I think, Turenne,\* at Strasbourg. An open grave lies before him; Death at his side, touching him with his dart; and the warrior descends, with a lofty step and saddened brow, but a conqueror still, because the act is so evidently his own and embraced by his own will, into the sepulchre. I remember it impressed me much with its moral force, and it has little or nothing in it of French theatricality and attitudinizing.

## CL.

A long, dreary vista of many months of pain opens out before me. Was that a good omen? just as I wrote those words a sudden gleam of sunshine burst out of this gloomy day upon my paper. Benvenuto Cellini would have taken it for a special prediction vouchsafed from heaven, yet it would have made him not a whit the better man. What I miss exceedingly is any religious aspiration through all his book. Convictions of Heaven's personal favor and favoritism are expressed in abundance, but I do not think those religious, in the true sense of the word. In a lower sense, perhaps, they are; at least, a feeling of Divine and personal sympathy is indispensable to religion—perhaps one of its bases; but the other basis—a belief in and aspiration after what is high, beautiful, and good—is the more solid and the less easily misused basis of the two; and this you do not find in Cellini's art as in Michael Angelo's, Canova's, Beethoven's—no effort at expressing a something unearthly, which is the true province of imagination.

I think it would be an interesting thing to work out that thought: How far Religion has those two sides—the sense of Personality, including sympathy, and the sense of an abstract Beauty and Right and Good—the one, if alone, producing superstition and fanaticism, or else the mysticism of the Guyon school; the other, if alone, producing mere ethics or mere statesmanship.

## CLI.

This morning I arrived here on a visit to Lady Byron, and have been in the house all day, having had no time yet to go out to see the country, which I am told is interesting, with rich woods and fine commons. Lady Byron showed me a picture of Lady Lovelace, taken at seventeen. How different from what she was when I knew her—unquestionably handsome, and with an air of sad thoughtfulness which then characterized her! Startling lessons these, in which two or three portraits bring a whole life before you, and show the fearful changes in the outward being. "Our little life is rounded with a sleep." Startling, because it reminds how the only thing that remains permanent is character. I have seen, too, to-day the original MS. of *Beppo*, from which the poem was printed. All such things are curious, and, in certain moods, prolific of much reflection, or rather feeling. The sweep of time, the nearness of the farthest off to that which is nearest, the nothingness of one's own existence in that flood of time—these are the thoughts which come, and, though very old ones, very new every time they present themselves, for they always startle.

The quietude of this place is refreshing, after the inevitable life *en evidence* of Brighton, its hurry and its glare. I have only been a few hours away, and I feel as if I had got back to the home-life of life, and am myself again, with

\* Query, Maréchal Saxe.

no weight of weary duty hanging over me, and no necessity of addressing a crowd of critics who are supposed to be before me to be taught; and yet within three days I shall be there again, in my old place, and at my old work. I wonder how you will like those sermons I sent you on the Virgin; the wiseacres at Brighton called the first Popery.

Coming in the train to-day, I read in the "Edinburgh" a review of Mrs. Jameson's "Legends of the Madonna," and was startled to find that it expressed, almost in the same words, what I had said the last two Sundays. Now, as I had held the same views long, and even preached them years ago, it puzzled me how the identity could have arisen. At last I recollected that three years ago, while Mrs. Jameson was preparing her work, she asked my opinion on the theology of Virgin-worship, which I gave to her, and which I perfectly remember seemed new to her. It has worked in her mind ever since, and she has published almost my words, perhaps unconscious of whence they came. That this must be so is evident to me from the reflection that, when the mind is full of any subject, it is impossible for the most casual remark to fall upon it without impression and without fructifying. The "Edinburgh" gives her credit for much originality in this view. I am pretty sure of its true origin, and I am not aware that I got it from any source except my own reflection. It would be awkward if ever I were inclined to publish those sermons, for it would be hard to prove that plagiarism was not on my part, and it would seem ungenerous to charge it upon her.

Tell me what you think of the two sermons\* on one subject. They have excited here a good deal of ignorant gossip and pious horror; people shaking their wise heads, and ominously predicting that I am on my way to Rome. How many ages would it take to explain what Shakspeare meant by "the soul of goodness in things evil?" and how long would it need to prove, that to say an error rests upon a truth is not quite the same thing as saying that an error is truth?

I consider these two as an installment towards an intention, long indulged, of going through some of the main doctrines of Romanism which I consider to be erroneous, and showing what the corresponding truth is, which the error meant to say. I do not mean to do this in a way that would satisfy the learned, but only popularly. I shall leave out all recondite searchings into Councils and dogmas, and try the matter by the test of common sense, and what may be called the spiritual sense, which we surely all possess, more or less—the best in the highest degree. Such a publication might at least stir up deeper minds to try the same plan with more success.

#### CLII.

Your question on the subject is not full enough for me to be sure that I am replying to what you want to know. A person can believe in a fact or a being whose nature he can not comprehend—as, for instance, in God, or in vegetation, or in life—but no one can believe a proposition the terms of which are unknown to him. For example, "Three persons are one God." Unless he knows what "person" means, he can not believe that, because he attaches no meaning whatever, or else a false one, to the assertion. And it is preposterous to say he must believe it as a mystery, because the Church says it; for all that he does in that case is to suspend his judgment on a subject of which he knows nothing, and to say, "The Church knows all about it, but I have not the smallest conception what it is she knows." So, for instance, a mathematician says to me, an ignoramus, "The velocities of planets vary inversely as the squares of their distances. Presumptuous skeptic! don't you believe that?" "Well," I reply, "I dare say you are right—nay, I believe you are; but I

\* Second Series, pp. 353, 393.

can not say I believe that long sentence, because I do not understand what it means." "Dolt! idiot! believe without understanding." "Well, wise sir, I will. 'The inverse squares of the planets'—no, how is it?—'The velocities of planets vary inversely,' etc." "Quite right—good and orthodox scholar. Now do *you* believe in Abracadabra?" "Sir, do you?" "Yes." "Then so do I." "But what is Abracadabra?" "Never mind that—believe."

All that is simple nonsense. No man can believe that the earth goes round the sun, unless he knows what that proposition is, and what is the meaning of "earth," "round the sun;" but once knowing this, he may believe it, though it is contrary to the evidence of his senses, and though he does not understand how or why it is.

*Apropos* of believing in things which we do not understand, a Tractarian was in Trinity when I preached on Mariolatry. "I did not agree," said he afterwards, "with Robertson. Woman—woman! I do not understand what woman is." I sent him a message, to say that I have been exactly in the same predicament all my life.

Just returned from Earnley. I found the shooting experiment useless, in consequence of the hard frost having frozen up all the streams; so, after two days' hard walking, in which I saw five snipes, shot two, and two plover, I thought that even Nimrod's ghost would absolve me from faint-heartedness if I gave up the attempt as hopeless. However, I spent an exceedingly pleasant evening with Mr. L—, and drank a glass or two of Mrs. L—'s orange-wine with a good grace. He is possessed of intelligence quite uncommon in that line of life—I mean the agricultural—and is reckoned the best farmer in the neighborhood. I should have learned something if I could have, with decency and the excuse of sport, staid longer. As it was, I dived into the mysteries of "shoulder drains," "wedge drains," and "tile drains." He has been for years a free-trader, but is very anxious for the repeal of the malt-tax. He says that if you were to offer him a return of £500 of rent, and as an equivalent the repeal of the malt-tax were proposed, he would sacrifice the rent without hesitation. He gave me a very lucid account of his view of Sir R. Peel's currency measure some years ago, which he said was a loss of five shillings in the pound to the farmer. According to him, the farmers have been very ill used, but he is very cheerful about it. I said: "But the brewers say the repeal of the malt-tax would be unfelt by the consumers; consequently more beer would not be purchased, and the farmers would gain nothing. Is that true?" He replied that some years ago, when the duty on salt existed, there were salt-basins all along this coast—Bognor, Selsea, and two other places between this and Portsmouth. But when the tax was taken off, no one thought it worth while to make salt. "How was that?" "Why, the makers ran (smuggled) a large proportion, and so managed to gain all the tax in addition to the profit." "Do you mean that that is the reason why the maltsters now are against the repeal, because they pocket a part of the tax?" "I know they do," said he.

He is a good Churchman, makes all his laborers go regularly, and is firmly but modestly opposed to Calvinism and Tractarianism. Before the present incumbent, there was one who wrote him a note, very civilly expostulating with him for not turning to the altar, and even turning from it to the light to read his prayer-book, and if he would not do it on principle, to do it for his sake. Mr. L— replied, quietly, that if he did not do it for the honor of the Creator, he certainly would not for His creature. But not knowing the matter *à fond*, and conscious that it was with him a vague feeling, he asked a neighboring clergyman where he could gain information on all such subjects. "I do not like," said he, "to know nothing, and the clergyman to know all." The book prescribed was Milner's "Church History," and he



spent the winter in reading that long book right through, and, as his memory is good, has forgotten nothing of it.

The house is a capital one—too good, he says, for a farm-house—with cellars, which he turns into a dairy. I slept in a good comfortable room and capital bed, and nothing could exceed his efforts to be hospitable in the hearty old English way. The farm is liable to overflowing floods, which is considered in the terms of the lease—low in consequence. He told me of his dismay in seeing the tide once come pouring over the barrier, which it at last swept away, and flooded the whole farm, regular billows going over his sown land up to the house. It went down, and, though the barrier was gone, did not rise the next tide beyond its accustomed height. For three years after such a flood the land is injured, and all the grass poisoned.

The farming is, even to an ignoramus, visibly admirable; draining going on in every direction; hedges, or rather fences, unbroken; no useless expense; living plain and simple; no foreign wines: "I like them, but they are not fit for us farmers in these days." Beer, and home-made wines, costing sixpence per bottle, and cherry-rum, almost indistinguishable from cherry-brandy, but saving very many shillings per gallon: these were the beverages of that hospital home. I wonder what an Irish squireen would say, or would once have said, to this.

I walked all day yesterday and to-day on the thick snow and half-frozen streams alone, with little enjoyment, haunted by miserable thoughts, dispirited, hopeless—feeling the bleak sunshine and the distant bellowing of the sea as if they were the visible type and audible echo of life, with its disappointments and its shocks! It was a relief to be alone. It was strange, but L——'s graphic account of the desolate spectacle of the flooding tide which he had stood to witness seemed to me as if it were the wraith of the feelings I had experienced; and in the bewilderment the two got mixed, and I could not at certain moments distinguish which was the dream and which the reality, or be certain that he was not narrating objectively what I had already seen or felt in ecstasy or vision. I shall never forget those strange days: the sweep of desolate plain, the glaring snow, the bleak sunshine without wind, the frozen streams—the rushes without the usual life of birds springing from them, which one expects—the sea-roar, the lifelessness of all—the stillness which was not relief, and the sounds which were not expression, all combined to image that "Death in life, the days that are no more."

Mr. ——'s irreverence about the fire is very like that school of Evangelicalism. "I must do them the justice to say that that is not the fault of them all: Mr. —— here, for instance, is solemn enough; Mr. P—— told me of his being asked out to wine at college, and replying with sepulchral solemnity, "I am *serious*." That false notion of a peculiar favoritism which they have with God, unshared by others, gives them that familiarity. The view which I believe to be the true one of baptism, declaring Sonship the right of all, "mine, because I am a man," is the only thought which I think an effectual antidote.

The letter I received from *that* lady is in earnest, so far as it goes; only that fatal facility of strong words expresses feeling which will seek for itself no other expression. Those resolves to study, to be serious, religious, etc., are such as might have been made at John the Baptist's baptism—a solemn call to a new life; and followed by serious and earnest effort, they would in such a case have been well, but uttered at the outset of a London season, they will pass off in the first polka, and do much more harm than if they had never been made. She believes or means what she says, but the very vehemence of the expression injures her, for really it expresses the penitence of a St. Peter, and would not be below the mark if it were meant to describe the

bitter tears with which he bewailed his crime; but when such language is used for trifles, there remains nothing stronger for the awful crisis of human life. It is like Draco's code—death for larceny, and there remains for parricide or treason only death.

## CLIII.

Last night I spent at home; I meant to dedicate the time to writing, but I was in a mood too dark and hopeless to venture. The exhaustion of Sunday remained; I tried light reading in vain. At last Charley came in from school, and I made him do his Latin exercise before me; all the while I kept my eyes fixed on that engraving of the head of Christ by Leonardo da Vinci, which I have had framed, and felt the calm majesty of the countenance by degrees exerting an influence over me, which was sedative. Then I made him read over, slowly, the Beatitudes, and tried to fix my mind and heart upon them and believe them; explaining them to him afterwards, and to myself as I went on. "Blessed are"—not the successful, but the poor "in spirit." "Blessed," not the rich, nor the admired, nor the fashionable, nor the happy, but "the meek and the pure in heart, and the merciful." They fell upon my heart like music. Then I thought I would just read a little of Golding Bird's volume of "Natural Philosophy," in order to brace the mind and add tone to harmony; but the effort had been too great, and after reading some twenty or thirty pages, I fell asleep, and woke again.

To-day I have spent in the Town-Hall, in the midst of a tumultuous meeting. We are trying to get the Health of Towns Act introduced into Brighton. Demagogues, whose interest will be injured by it, are stirring up the working-classes against it. It was an odd sight—as the mob always is—

Thou many-headed monster thing,  
Oh! who would wish to be thy king!

At the root of the whole matter, as usual, lay selfishness and ignorance. One respectable man said to me, in reply to my observation, that modern science had discovered the cause of epidemics, etc., in want of cleanliness, undrained houses, etc. "Why, sir, if these are injurious in 1853, I want to know why they were not injurious in 1800?" "Suppose," said I, "they were; and suppose in former ages, when people wisely attributed the plague to the poisoning of wells by doctors, there were some other very simple reason which they really did not know?" The truth is, the knowledge of this enlightened age is the knowledge of a few—the many are as dark as they were ages back.

I inclose one sheet of a letter from Lady Byron, containing strictures upon my "Lecture on Wordsworth." They are erroneous, because she misunderstands my meaning, which I had not sufficiently developed. I maintain that the localizing of Deity of which he speaks was only that which an affectionate imagination does in reference to the presence of any loved person; an act which has only reference to his or her own mode of conceiving that presence—as when a relic or keepsake is preserved, or a chair felt to be sacred. An enlarged mind in such a case localizes safely, because it is in no danger of confounding its own modes of viewing and realizing with an actual presence there. It knows that there is a presence, but only suggested, not inherent. A limited intellect confuses its own necessary helps with an actual something external to itself, and the spirit of the loved one is supposed to be *there*. So in Wordsworth's High-Churchism, I maintain it was due in him only to the poet's creative power. He felt a relief in associating God, the personal, with definite places and acts; but Wordsworth never merged God's indefinite in those conceptions: vulgar High-Churchism does.

What Lady Byron says of the apparent contradiction to my views of the

progress from Judaism to Christianity, in Wordsworth's progress, viz., that the former was from the localized to the illimitable, the latter the converse, is only true in appearance. All human education does not follow the same exact course; nay, it may begin in one case at the opposite extreme from what it does in the other. The great question is, "Do they end in the same at last?" I think Wordsworth's mind at first lacked the conception of personality. It was added afterwards; and if this reverse method of procedure were unlawful, how could a man who sets out with pantheism ever come to truth? He can not follow the Jewish order, which I admit is the more natural one, as existing in the order of thought by which childhood passes into manhood.

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The historian I mainly meant in speaking of national decline was Arnold. But do not misunderstand me. I do not say I respect long ancestry much; I only say the *prestige* is a valuable one, and more spiritual than the same of wealth; and also, that having a character to support, frequently insures a character, so that there are certainly virtues which are essentially aristocratic. But when it is remembered that the purer the "blood" is, and the less mixed, the more certain is the deterioration physically and morally, and also that the regeneration of a people never yet came from its aristocracy, there can be no doubt that while our sympathies cling to the past, and while we feel that, in the past, hereditary rank has done a great part, it is impossible to hide the fact that the passing away of it is not an unmixed cause of regret. Blood, so far as it represents real worth, is much to be desired for its *prestige*; but when the *prestige* is gone, blood, with its feeblenesses and faults, is not to me an object of respect at all—at least, I mean in the individual cases.

What can ennoble sots, or fools, or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!

It is a thing that has been, that will never be again—a thing that once did a work, and now has no more work to do. I honor old Greece, and the old Greek work; but I have not the smallest respect for a modern Peloponnesian or Athenian, though he had in his veins the unblemished descent of Aristides, or Solon, or Lycurgus.

#### CLIV.

To-day I walked to Lewes with H— over the Downs, and home by the road. The walk to Lewes was a stiff one, for the hills were wet from the scarcely-melted snow, and on the north sides they were hard with frost, so that we slipped about considerably. We did it, however, all the way at a racing pace—there and back in three hours and a half. I took a hot bath in my own room directly on my arrival, and feel considerably refreshed—the brain clearer, and at this moment all my nature sinking into a natural and healthy weariness such as has not come to me for a long time. It is wonderful how views of life depend upon exercise and right management of the physical constitution. Nor is this, rightly looked at, any cause for perplexity, though it seems so at first; for though you might be inclined to view it as a degradation of our higher nature to find it so dependent upon the lower, and hope and faith and energy resultant from a walk or early hours—yet, in fact, it is only a proof that all the laws of our manifold being are sacred, and that disobedience to them is punished by God. And the punishment in one department of our nature of the transgressions committed in the other—as, for instance, when mental gloom comes from uncleanness or physical inertia, and, on the other hand, where ill-health ensues from envy or protracted doubt—is but one of many instances of the law of vicarious suffering. We are, as it were, two, and one suffers by what the other does.

## CLV.

As to the "History of England," Lingard's is very good; dry, however, and on all Roman Catholic questions not to be depended upon. It appears to me that the history of England is a subject too enormous to attempt to teach a child. I would rather select some salient points; for example, the reign of Alfred—then the Norman Conquest. Thierry might be extracted for this with Lingard. The times intermediate between this and Henry VIII. I would teach by some abridgment; for his reign I would take Lingard, and Blunt on the Reformation. Mary, in Miss Strickland, who leans, however, unduly to her, as you will see by the "Westminster," when I send it. Elizabeth's is very important—Lingard; for the Charles's reigns, Guizot, and Mackintosh, and Fox, though the two latter might be dispensed with. Then Macaulay for the Revolution. In this, or some such way, a course of English history might be gone through, in a calculated number of months, and mastered. The intervals might be filled in in after-years. But, taken as a whole, English history becomes to most minds either a string of dates and names, with no principle of national life traced out, or else a dreary continent of mud. For French history, I would content myself with Sir James Stephens's lectures and Sismondi's history, abridged by himself in three volumes; but I would not be induced to teach more until these were mastered.

In Oxford four years are spent in preparing about fourteen books only for examination: but this is only a partial representation of the matter, for those fourteen books have been the subject of school-work for years. These are made text-books, read, re-read, digested, worked, got up, until they become part and parcel of the mind; about four histories, three or four philosophical works, four poets, and two or three miscellaneous works. These are the choice master-works of two languages, and whoever has mastered them is a scholar indeed. By C——'s letter to you I see she is reading Southey's "Peninsular War," and meditating one or two other great works. At Oxford, Southey's "Peninsular War" would take six months to study, pen in hand, getting up the details of policy, battles, laws, geography, etc. It is better not to read at all than to run through such a book. I have got a small popular book on chemistry, which I am reading now, of 160 pages. I have read little else for a fortnight! but then I could bear an examination on every law and principle it lays down. Fownes's "Manual of Chemistry," a small octavo, will take me six months, I calculate; but then, as a medical man said to me to-day, "If you study it in the way you are doing, you will know by that time more chemistry than nine out of ten of the medical men in this town." I never knew but one or two fast readers and readers of many books, whose knowledge was worth any thing. Miss Martineau says of herself that she is the slowest of readers, sometimes a page in an hour; but then what she reads she makes her own. Do impress this on E——. Girls read too much and think too little. I will answer for it that there are few girls of eighteen who have not read more books than I have; and as to religious books, I could count upon my fingers in two minutes all I ever read—but they are mine. Sir Erskine Perry said the other day that, a fortnight ago, in a conversation with Comte—one of the most profound thinkers in Europe—Comte told him that he had read an incredibly small number of books these last twenty years—I forgot how many—and scarcely ever a review; but then what Comte reads lies there fructifying, and comes out a living tree, with leaves and fruit. That multifarious reading weakens the mind more than doing nothing, for it becomes a necessity at last, like smoking, and is an excuse for the mind to lie dormant, whilst thought is poured in and runs through, a clear stream, over unproductive gravel, on which not even mosses grow. It is the idlest of all idlenesses, and leaves more of impotency than any other.

I do not give myself as a specimen, for my nervous energies are shattered by stump oratory, its excitements and reactions; but I know what reading is, for I could read once, and did. I read hard, or not at all—never skimming—never turning aside to merely inviting books; and Plato, Aristotle, Butler, Thucydides, Sterne, Jonathan Edwards, have passed like the iron atoms of the blood into my mental constitution. My work is done—I know and feel it; but what I have appropriated remains; and if I had not appropriated it so, there would be no soil now or hereafter to grow any thing on even for appearance.

## CLVI.

An evening of failure. In vain have I tried to work or think. The only resource at last is to fall back on an old sermon. This mental powerlessness is becoming fast an alarming thing; memory and grasp are both going; and with an incessant call for fresh thought, this feeling is a more than ordinarily painful one.

I have done all I can to throw off this impotency of mind and will, and this growing coldness of a species of despair, by long walks, cold baths, and complete change of study—by taking up chemistry and natural philosophy again. Such studies bring a different class of faculties into play from those exercised in my own work, and so rest the overtaken ones; but as yet I feel no benefit.

Mrs. V—— read to me ——'s letter about the Wordsworth lecture. Yes, indeed, if I had not been a parson; but what Mr. —— speaks of as the alternative in this case, the being heard of in the world, would be a poor thing to have won. What I long for is work that I can do in love, without meeting the rancor and the bitterness and the malignant slanders which I rouse on every side. It is a bitter thought that this is the only visible result of efforts that have been long wearing life.

How rare it is to have a friend who will defend you thoroughly and boldly! Mr. —— missed an opportunity of doing this for me, and has not the courage to do it now as he ought to do; leaving me, in consequence, defenseless against a slander, though I put the proof into his hands. How indispensable strength is for high goodness—strength moral or intellectual—neither depending necessarily on physical strength!

Yesterday I took a walk beyond Hove with Mr. V——. In the cross-road between the Worthing Road and the Upper Road we found a crowd behind a hedge, and shoals of women flocking from Brighton towards the place. On inquiry, we found that it was the spot where a child was murdered, or rather its body hidden, two days ago by its mother, a servant-girl. The child was six years old, and it is supposed that she murdered it in order to be unencumbered, and to be able to go out to Australia. It is very inexplicable to me how such things exercise an attraction over people, and what can induce them to take long excursions to see a *spot*, where nothing but the spot is to be seen. How utterly vain it is, with such an instinct in human nature, to attempt to eradicate the High-Church tendency, the disposition to localize, as I said in my lecture! If they can not guide the feeling and direct it rightly, all attempts to merely thwart it will be vain.

I have been spending my time in laborious idleness—every thought I think, and every line I write or read costing pain, sometimes acute and sometimes dull, of brain. I shall not be able to go on much longer if this continues; whole tracts of brain seem to be losing their faculty, and becoming quite torpid and impotent—memory being the most observable and the most tormenting. All originating power I have ceased to try to exercise, on principle, lest it should go entirely. I seem to myself already in sight of that

goal which a London physician, an American, told me I should reach in due time—organic collapse of the brain. I have been reading a little chemistry, by way of change, and am beginning regular experiments in it; but then this I can not work at except for a quarter of an hour at a time.

A hideous accident occurred to-day at the station. At 7 A.M. a loud explosion shook my house. Some persons took it for an earthquake. Shortly after I learned that a boiler had burst, and that much damage was done. I went to the station, and found an enormous portion of the roof on the Portsmouth line had been blown away, and all the windows of the station, as well as many in the road above, broken in. I saw three human bodies reduced to one hideous bleeding mass of fragments—a scalp here, a shoulder there, and a leg or hand in another place; one was recognizable, but his face was scalded like a red Indian in color, and all the skull stove in, one arm blown off, and the limb shattered; the other two were torn to shreds. A leg was blown over the houses into Guildford Street, and through the windows where two people were at breakfast; another, on the other side, towards St. Peter's Church, into a garden. I will not attempt to describe the horrible scene minutely, for I never saw any thing so humiliating to our humanity; nothing but a "knacker's yard" could give a conception of it. I thought at once of a French invasion, and of those lines in the "Siege of Corinth:"

Alp turned him from the sickening sight, etc.

just after he had seen the lean dogs beneath the wall

Hold o'er the dead their carnival.

It was a strange contrast to come back again into the busy town, and see people unconcernedly walking about within a hundred yards of so much horror; but I felt there was nothing in such a sight to *create* one religious emotion or resolve, though it might evoke it if it were in the heart already. Of themselves such things only tend to harden and degrade, I am quite sure; for how can horror, or the thought of death brought near, make goodness beautiful or God lovable? I see in them no natural tendency whatever to convert the heart to God; and I can understand how the dissecting-room and the field of battle may brutalize low natures, at the same time that they may elevate high ones. Pray read over again, with reference to this thought, Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior."

#### CLVII.

I have spent this evening in reading thoughtfully and meditating on Neander's "Doctrine of St. John," imbuing my mind with a tone of thought for Sunday next. I find that to be the only way in which my mind works. I can not copy, nor can I now work out a seed of thought, developing it for myself. I can not light my own fire; but whenever I get my fire lighted from another life, I can carry the living flame as my own into other subjects which become illuminated in the flame. Mechanical composition of any kind is out of my power, always was. It is wonderful how powerless I am, except as working from life. Even memory seems extinguished when the heart's life is not in play; and any inspiration brings out its invisible traces again, as fire brings out the colors of sympathetic inks on paper. Unhappily, of late, such life can not be, as once—seemingly, at least—self-kindled. I need a foreign influence to imbue my mind with some other great mind, till the creative power rises in the glow. All, therefore, that I can voluntarily effect is to bring myself intentionally and purposely within the sphere of such influences as can kindle; only they become fewer every month; and their power to inspire is more uncertain and more dependent upon outward circumstances and seeming chance.

Did I tell you of a practical solution in part of the question as to what the influence of pictures may be religiously? I took the "Leonardo" up to my room some weeks ago, on a Sunday night. The next morning I awoke tired, and felt inclined to dawdle away my time in bed; but that calm, dignified look, bent down from my mantel-piece, absolutely rebuked me, and made it impossible. It is true, the impression would have worn off before a second experiment could have been fairly tried.

Rodney House, Cheltenham, April 15.

I am truly glad you like Humboldt's letters so much. How necessary for appreciation of a book, scene, picture, society, is a certain previous adaptation of the frame of mind! Do you remember how little you cared for that book the first time of reading it in a smaller form? Experience, added light, and the aspect given by events which no purpose or control could have arranged, have given it now fresh meaning and made it a new book.

The difference which you remark between the moral effects of those two places is curious. The contemplative *genius loci* of the one I can comprehend, though it always impelled me to action, exercise, and excursions; but the activity-exciting spirit of the other place I less readily can conceive. There is a certain sombreness there which rather invites to sadness, unless you rush to action in self-defense; and perhaps the air of civilization reminds you there that you are in a world where the law is, Be busy about something. Now in a state of savagery or anywhere that the march of contrivance and the teeming numbers of population urging to industry are shut out, life can more readily become a dream—a melancholy, but tender, and not rude dream.

Here in this place I find much altered: most of my intimate acquaintances are gone, married, buried, or estranged.

#### CLVIII.

Cheltenham.

Light reading and visiting old acquaintances have been my sole occupation here. I have finished "Ruth" and "Villette," and several of Sir Walter Scott's, and am much struck by the marked difference between the fiction of his day and ours; the effect produced is very opposite. From those of Scott you rise with a vigorous, healthy tone of feeling; from the others, with that sense of exhaustion and a weakness which comes from feeling stirred up to end in nothing. Scott's narratives run smoothly on with a profusion of information respecting the outer life of the days which he describes—the manners, customs, dress, modes of thought, and general feeling; but you have no glances into the inner life—no throes and convulsions of conscience—no conflicts of Duty with Inclination—no mysteries of a soul treading willfully; or compelled by circumstances, the dangerous, narrow border-land between right and wrong. Partly this is accounted for by the fact that in his stirring times life was an outer thing, and men were not forced into those mysterious problems which are pressing for solution now; and partly by another fact, that women have since then taken the lead in the world of literature, and imparted to fiction a new character. They are trying to *aborder* questions which men had looked upon as settled; and this might have been expected, from their being less able to understand or recognize the authority of statute law and conventional moralities than men, and much less disposed to acknowledge their eternal obligation, and also much more quick to feel the stirring laws of nature—mysterious, dim, but yet, in their way, even more sacred. The result of this has been that questions which men would rather have left unexamined, or else approached with coarseness, are now the staple subjects of our modern fiction—"Jane Eyre," "Villette," "Ruth," and many things in Margaret Fuller's writings; these, with the works of several

American writers, as Hawthorne, in whom, though men, the woman-movement has worked deeply, are the most remarkable of our modern novels, and characterize the commencement of an epoch. That great question, how far conventional law is to stifle the workings of inclination, and how far inclination—supposing it to be sacred and from our higher nature—is justified in bidding it defiance, what a wide field that opens! It is a perilous question, and opens a door for boundless evil as well as good.

The French writers have said, as usual, with the full license of a nation to whom duty has no meaning, that the door is to be wide as hell; "Evil, be thou my good," seems to be the watch-word of those that I have read. If they are right, God is a being whose existence is as superfluous as a devil's. A sense of horrible materialism steals over me in reading their attempts to solve the problem, and the laws of materialism seem the only ones left to guide man. The "constitution of man" must replace the prophets, and a study of the cerebral laws of organization sweep away the sanctions both of the Law and the Gospel. Mesmerism and Electro-biology must take the place of the New Testament, and *les beaux sentiments* become our compass instead of the Book of Life. Happily, the English novelists have approached the question with purer instincts and a more severely moral tone—witness "Jane Eyre" and "Ruth;" and yet they do open the question, and I rejoice to see it opened: yes, and more—opened by women, for I despair of men ever doing it with justice. The new divorce law, as proposed, refuses to the woman the right to divorce her husband, let his crimes be what they may, unless he adds brutal ill-treatment of her to crime. What hope is there from such a social state of feeling?

The worst, however, of the new tone in novel-writing is that it sets one thinking in a way that can find no vent in action, and makes one dissatisfied with existing errors and institutions, without the slightest possibility of altering them; nay, or even knowing what alteration to desire. The result of this becoming general may, perhaps, produce a restlessness which will issue in improvement; meantime, each must be content to bear his share of the unsatisfied restlessness which is hereafter to find such issue.

I am not well; I am suffering much, but it is of no use to talk about it. Nothing can be done except by attacking symptoms, and that is useless. The causes are irremediable, and they must go on working to their consummation.

## CLIX.

Cheltenham.

To-morrow, by the early express, I return to work. I wish I could take another fortnight, for this rest has only done partial good. The chief good it has done me is in having showed me much more of staunch affection, unchilled through six years' absence, than I supposed was to be found in this light place. Certainly I have been surprised to find how warmly and truly many have cherished the remembrance of me. Five men here I have found steady as steel to the magnet; and that, out of so few who remain, is a large number—all laymen.

It is not necessary to say that absence from Brighton is now impossible for some months to come; by August I shall be thoroughly tired again, I fear—nay, if I were to search for a word to exactly express what I feel now, mentally and physically, I should select "shattered." In a literary point of view, I find Sir Walter Scott the most healthful restorative of any. There was no morbid spot in that strong, manly heart and nature.

Brighton.

What a valuable gift it is to be able to take up the thread of thought as if it had never been broken! Scott had it. He would dictate two novels and to two amanuenses at once. With me a broken flow of thought will not gush



again. I began with my mind full of thoughts. Now, after a long interruption, I feel exhausted and dissipated: the thing is gone from me, as the simple writers of early days expressed it. Moreover, the splitting headache has come back again; it returned on Saturday, as soon as I began to work; and on Sunday I could scarcely see for pain. I only took the morning pulpit, and preached an old Cheltenham sermon. All the evening I spent lying on the ground, my head resting on a chair.

I have been reading "My Novel"—the first volume only as yet—the only work in the form of a tale I ever read which succeeded in introducing moral and political discussion, and even making the work practical by their introduction, without being tedious, tempting the reader to skip the politics and take the story; even "Coningsby" failed in this. "My Novel" weaves the tale and the doctrines inseparably together, and in a really masterly way. The discussion of the Parson and Riccabocca with Linney respecting the pamphlet with the motto "Knowledge is power," is very clever and interesting. The book breathes a sound, healthy tone of feeling, very different from Bulwer Lytton's earlier works. For instance, in page 204: "He had been brought up from his cradle in simple love and reverence for the Divine Father and the tender Saviour—Whose life, beyond all record of human goodness—Whose death, beyond all epics of mortal heroism, no being whose infancy has been taught to supplicate the Merciful and adore the Holy—yea, even though his later life may be entangled amid the storms of dissolute pyrrhonism—can ever hear reviled and scoffed without a shock to the conscience and a revolt to the heart."

Bulwer's mental career is a very peculiar one. Generally minds exhaust themselves—the wines first, the lees afterwards; witness Sir Walter Scott after many years. But his was a strong nature. Commonly the indications of running dry, or repeating old views and character under new forms, show themselves after one or two works: in the lady novelists this is very conspicuously so—so too in Hawthorne; in the voluminous James, of course. But here is Bulwer coming out with his last two novels as fresh and different from each other, and as racy and original, as if he had never written any thing before.

## CLX.

MY DEAR —,—I have read gratefully your most eloquent letter; but for the life of me I can not make out the exact practical upshot of it. Beyond the direction to consult a "finger-post physician," I read it through again and again for guidance in vain.

Well, as to that, I have not been so foolish as not to have done it long ago. I paid three guineas, foolishly, to three leading London physicians for an opinion. The first (—) prescribed, I forget what—some hash or other; the second threatened "organic collapse of the brain," and refused to prescribe any thing save entire and total cessation from the pulpit for life. The third (—) recommended *lettuce!*

Here Taylor recommended opiates. Allen and Whitehouse, men in whom I have profound confidence, say that all medicaments in my case are charlatany. In Cheltenham, the only man I would trust in this particular case was away. A personal friend, a homœopathic physician, amused himself with giving me microscopic points of aconite, to my benevolent enjoyment of his credulity. They can do nothing, and they all tell me so; only they disagree as to the amount of danger. One hinted idiocy. Others advise relaxed toil. Now, as I *can not* toil, and do so no longer, this advice is in vain.

A curious circumstance occurred yesterday. A member of the Trinity congregation, a chemist, fancied galvanism would do me good, and kindly offered his battery for my use one hour a day. I called to thank him and

decline the offer. But in conversation he persuaded me just to go and look at his apparatus. I took the ends of the wire, completed the circuit, and experienced the usual pleasurable tingling. Then holding it in one hand, and he holding the other wire in his, he touched the back of my head and neck, where I have lately felt pain and numbness. Not a sensation did it elicit, though the spot which is generally, he says, most sensitive. Then he touched my forehead. It was but for a second. Instantly a crashing pain shot through as if my skull was stove in, and a bolt of fire were burning through and through. I sprang to my feet, stood for a second or two wild with pain, and then sank down, and should have had another lady-like swoon, if he had not run to the shop and fetched some poignant aromatic. He seemed much astonished, frightened, and perplexed at what had taken place. I was not surprised. I knew that something was wrong there. Allen thinks nothing organically as yet (I have not told him this), but the sensations are very strange and startling which I experience in twenty-four hours. It has nothing to do with "tic," which always attacks the chest, etc., etc. The worst sensation now is numbness in the neck.

You will perhaps think me a hypochondriac. But a man who knits his teeth together in solitude for hours, without a groan, in torture, and is guilty of nothing effeminate except fainting, and upon whose life a sentence of death for to-morrow would scarcely bring any other words than *Nunc dimittis*, is hardly hypochondriacal. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that my work is done. I do not mean my life; that may drag on for many years to come; but all that makes life worth the having, and which certainly I had once—*power*. What would you have me do? I go through as little work as possible, nor could I diminish except by totally giving up. Give up I can not, because I can not afford it; among other reasons, my generous congregation have munificently put funds at my disposal which will enable me to provide a curate's assistance for two years—so that is a great step, and I have thought it right to accept their offer. But I acknowledge that the sensations of brain by day and night now are so new, strange, and unnatural, that I feel they have only contrived, by their kindness, to keep among them a worn-out Chelsea pensioner, with leave to wear a red coat and play at shouldering arms.

You mistook me in thinking I did not sympathize. A few years ago, when I felt less, you would have been more satisfied, when the eyes showed moisture, the voice emotion, and when I had a gentler manner and a more ready show of responding to what was expected. Now a certain amount of iron has gone into my blood; and a sardonic sentence often conceals the fact that I wince to the very quick from something that has gone home.

Oh, many a shaft at random sent  
Finds mark the archer little meant!

I no longer wear my heart upon my sleeve, "for daws to peck at." But there is not a conversation, there is not a book I read, there is not a visit I pay, that does not cut deep traces in the "Calais" of my heart.

#### CLXI.

I answer some of your questions: 1 Cor. ix. 27. "Castaway." The meaning is—Lest, after having preached to others the doctrine of self-abridgment of indulgences in things lawful, I myself should fail when put to the test; literally, should be that which will not stand proof. The advice to abstain from things lawful, he gave them in the 8th chapter—see verses 9 and 13; then, in chapter 9, he shows that he had only done what he advised; he had a right to a wife (verse 5), and a right to be supported by pay; but he had abridged himself of both these rights (though every principle of the

Old Testament, chapter ix. 8, \* \* \* 13, 14, established his right), simply in order to be beyond suspicion and gain the more to Christ. Read the two chapters 8 and 9 as one argument, and the whole will become intelligible. "If there be any virtue"—"If," etc., is not an oddly-constructed phrase; it is purely classical Greek. It means whatever is virtuous, praiseworthy, etc., think upon such things. An old poet writes, "Nor if old Anacreon wrote aught sportively has time destroyed it." He does not mean to hazard a doubt, but simply to say, whatever Anacreon wrote is undestroyed. It is a Greek idiom, and only sounds curious in English.

You would not like ——'s preaching. It is not what it was once—concise, sinewy, masculine, and clear as crystal, defying any listener to suspend attention. He has degenerated into verbiage; and in the last sermon I heard, he took ten minutes to say what three sentences might have settled. He has lost his power, which was once the greatest I ever knew. The sentimental people of his congregation attribute it to an increase in spirituality; but it is, in truth, a falling-off of energy of grasp. I heard four sermons from him with scarcely four thoughts, and much absolutely false logic. But how can a man preach for ten years without exhausting himself, or else pandering to popularity? Talk, talk, talk forever, and no retreat to fructifying silence!

That is a well-put criticism you quote respecting Currer Bell. Her talk is of duty, her sympathies lie with passion. And the dangers of that style of composition are great; but she never blinks the question of right and wrong, and her right is of a stern order, though her wrong may be very tempting. In point of power she is a giant to the authoress of "Ruth," but her book is less sweet and human.

Poor ——! how bounded every life seems, judged as we judge; yet the results are forever; and as it has been again and again declared, the deepest philosophy in the universe is repeated in every cubic inch, and all the laws of the ocean in a cup of tea—why not be satisfied, then, with the cup of tea whose sphere is not absolutely illimitable.

CLXII.

I have found pain a humbling thing, and, what surprises me, certainly not a souring one. Many and many an hour have I spent lately incapable of even conceiving enjoyment or pleasure, and feeling as if youth and hope were settling down into premature decrepitude, my very limbs having shrunk to the dimensions of Shakspeare's lean and slippered pantaloons; and yet I am grateful to say that not for years has the feeling been so true, or mixed with so little bitterness—"not as I will."

On Sunday, after service, a lady came up to me whom I had known in the very outset of my ministry. She talked with me of the past; and then said, with tears, "But, oh, you are so changed in mind, it is quite heart-aching to hear you preach: it was no longer the bright, happy Mr. Robertson." The truth is, I had been preaching on St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, and this would partly account for what she remarked. Yet conversation with her brought back those days at Winchester strongly, and I felt that she was right, and that the shadows of life had settled down. Yet is not this the common experience for the first four-fifths of life at least?

Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience moving towards the stillness of his rest.

CLXIII.

I must acknowledge the truth of what you say in the main, that I do not admire any one who is not in robust health. Of course I must bate a little exaggeration in the form of statement; but I acknowledge that I think

health more beautiful than ill-health, and a normal state more pleasant than an abnormal. There may be some apparent exceptions to the rule, as in the case of recovery from illness there is a certain delicacy which is very attractive; but then it is the first flush of health that gives the beauty, just like that which makes spring more interesting than summer. Still it is not merely delicacy that is beautiful, but delicacy pervaded by health and conquered by it—life in its first fresh rising, like a new childhood; but I acknowledge that I can not acquire the sickly taste of admiring the delicacy of ill-health. Beauty, in my eyes, depends much upon association; and delicacy that calls up one's knowledge of morbid anatomy, and suggests the thought of disordered functions, and abnormal states, and physicians' attendance, never affects me with a sense of beauty. This may be an unfashionable view, but I am certain it is a sound and healthy one, fresh from Nature's heart. The other taste is of the same family as that which makes the Chinese admire feet quashed into smallness. I admire refinement in a female form; but the moment that it appears as the result of ill-health, I reject it as a counterfeit. For this reason I can not even admire the hectic of consumption; it puts me in mind at once of glaring eyes and panting breath, and I see what will be. I have a fastidiousness of taste in this respect, almost painful, and I acknowledge that I admire the beauty which God made—health—immeasurably above the counterfeit which man procures. A country girl, modest and neat, is not my *beau idéal* of beauty; but I admire her far more than a pale, languid girl of fashion, just as I like brown bread better than bleached-white veal; but I think you are much mistaken if you mean by delicacy that I do not admire refinement. I can not admire any thing that reminds one of the "mould above the rose," and forces upon one the question, whether an allopathic or homœopathic druggist could best get rid of that delicate look. I delight not in any thing unnatural or diseased. Lord Byron has well described this unhealthy taste about beauty, in his description of the Spanish ladies, as compared with the "languid, wan, and weak" forms of others.

I rejoice that you like Wordsworth's "Life." Badly and coldly as it is written, the extracts from his own letters give some insight into his inner life. And it seems to me, in reading lives, the question too often is whether it be one which in all respects answers our ideal of a life; whereas the question ought to be, whether it has strongly exhibited some side or other of our manifold and many-sided life. I am satisfied with One life—with One ideal, and I read all others to understand that, by illustration or contrasts of their whole to parts of it. Now Wordsworth throws some light on its purely contemplative side. The life of Action and Sacrifice is wanting, but I can find those in various forms—in Wellington's life, or women's, etc.

My life for the last few weeks has been one of perpetual pain—forced to work, and forced to mix with people, and to talk when it has taken me actually, only two days ago, an hour and a quarter to crawl, by back streets, from Kemp Town, in suffering all the way; and now at this moment languor makes me stop in writing after every third line. If my congregation had not come forward so generously, and if I had not received so many letters full of kindness, containing expressions of pain and regret about my looks, etc., I should, I verily think, have given up work entirely, so hardly does it press upon me, and so much that is painful have I had to submit to. But their warmth has settled the question, and left me no alternative, and I must work on as long as I have strength for it.

## CHAPTER XII.

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, 1853.

Mr. Robertson leaves Trinity Chapel forever.—The Controversy with the Vicar of Brighton.—The last sad Months.—His Death and Burial.

THE last few months of Mr. Robertson's life were not passed in peace. A blow was dealt him by one to whom his courtesy had been invariable, and dealt him at a time when its stroke was fatal. The Rev. H. M. Wagner, the Vicar of Brighton, refused, from personal pique against Mr. Tower, to allow of his nomination as curate to Trinity Chapel, unless under conditions which Mr. Robertson refused even to propose to Mr. Tower. There was nothing for Mr. Robertson to do but submit; but that submission hastened his death. It was imperative that he should have rest. In his letter to the Vicar he urged not only his friend's cause, but the opinion of the doctors, that without help his own health must finally give way. The Vicar replied that his objection was conscientious and final; and yet this objection rested on the single circumstance that two years before Mr. Tower had resisted the Vicar's will, not on a religious, but on a financial question. "You will agree with me," writes Mr. Robertson, in his published letter to the Committee, "that this conduct leaves me without an alternative. I will not trust myself to characterize it as I feel it, for strong sense of wrong makes a man prone to use strong words. It is enough to say quietly, using the mildest terms which are consistent with truth, that by a discourteous and ungenerous exercise of legal power, and by the rude manner in which I was personally treated, and of which I have said nothing in this letter, the Vicar has put it out of my power to offer another nominee, or to accept any favors at his hands. I owe this both to my friend's character and to myself. There remains for me nothing but to go on with my work single-handed as long as I am able."

Undeterred by the tone of this letter, Mr. Wagner wrote to ask Mr. Robertson to name another curate. This proposition was the last stroke. It was answered by the following dignified and forcible refusal:

60 Montpelier Road, June 22, 1853.

REVEREND SIR,— I have to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 18th inst., in which you recommend me to present another nominee for your approval, and offer to find some one to supply his place till appointed.

I regret that I can not reciprocate the bland tone of this last communication; for I confess that patronizing offers of favor seem to me out of place, when that which is asked for, and still peremptorily refused, is the redress of a wrong. And I regret to find that you view the matter between us, your own part in it in particular, in a much more light and easy way than that in which any one else will see it. Suffer me to be explicit; for the forbearance of my first letter having been unappreciated, I am compelled to speak English that can not be misunderstood.

I can not offer another nominee; nor is it in my power to accept at your hands the favor of any aid such as you offer.

I will examine, first, the objection against Mr. Tower, and how far it is possible for me to pass smoothly by the rejection of my friend, and receive a favor from his rejector.

The charge, as I collect it from your words, assumes two shapes:

1. Unbecoming behavior in interfering with the affairs of the Lewes Deanery Branch of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge—a society established in your parish.

2. Unbecoming conduct towards yourself.

With respect to the first, it must be remembered that, though Brighton be the head-quarters of the Branch Society, and the Vicar of Brighton at present chairman, it is not a Brighton society, but one belonging to the whole Deanery of Lewes, and that, as a clergyman of the Deanery, and member of the Committee, Mr. Tower had an equal right with yourself to move any measures he thought right. It is as incorrect to imply that he interfered with a parochial society, or the prerogatives of the Vicar of Brighton, as it is unjust to insinuate that, as a curate, he took too much upon him. The country clergy *gave* him—he did not *assume*—a leading part in the discussion, because he was furnished with considerable information from the Parent Society.

2dly. With respect to Mr. Tower's personal conduct to yourself. An overwhelming majority of the Committee—all, indeed, I believe, except those who are bound by some personal tie to yourself, and therefore, perhaps naturally, feel with you—are prepared to assert that Mr. Tower's conduct on those occasions was that of a Christian and a gentleman. If necessary, I shall call for that testimony. I *could* call for more, but I have no wish for recrimination.

For the question is not, after all, whether Mr. Tower spoke warmly to you, or you to him, nor whether Mr. Tower was right or wrong in the course which he at least pursued conscientiously; but the question is, whether that course was sufficient ground for permanent unforgiveness on your part, and whether such offenses as a personal difference with yourself, and interference in a favorite society of your own, admitting them to have existed to their fullest extent, are just grounds for the rejection of one whom you yourself admit to be in conduct and doctrine an exemplary Christian minister. No bishop would exclude from his diocese on such grounds; if he did, all England would ring with the news of the transaction.

I will now advert, with much regret, to your treatment of myself, which will account for my inability to adopt suddenly the suave tone of your last communication. I fix on a single instance.

On Trinity-Sunday, during our first accidental interview between services, I told you several times that I was desirous of postponing the subject of the curacy till to-morrow, and anxious to return home, as I had to prepare for

the duties of the afternoon pulpit, and was much pressed for time. In spite of this, within half an hour you abruptly and unnecessarily invaded a privacy which you knew I had such anxious reasons to keep calm and sacred from interruption; and with yourself you forced upon me as a witness a gentleman personally unknown to me. The witness-system, in a conversation between gentlemen, used by you to me even more offensively on a previous occasion, is in itself a very objectionable proceeding. It is scarcely necessary to say that the interruption incapacitated me from addressing my congregation on the intended subject.

I select this fact, not because it is the only instance, by many, of your discourtesy, but because your own witness was present. These are not supposed to be the manners of civilized society; nor can the grievance of them be obliterated by a few smooth lines, not of apology, but of patronage. It is curious to see with what marvellously different degrees of tenacity men retain the recollection of their own discourtesy to others, and that of others towards them. At the end of a couple of weeks, all that you said and did to me seems to have vanished from your mind; at the end of two years, Mr. Tower's so-called transgression against yourself is as indelible as ever.

I much regret that it is my duty to write thus plainly, because I foresee that the publication of this letter may be necessary—the right of doing which I reserve to myself; more especially as your uncalled-for offer to supply my pulpit may give a fallacious aspect to the whole affair, unless I very distinctly show what the question at issue is, and what it is not.

I can offer no other nominee, because I can not admit your right of rejection on personal grounds. I am informed that you have a legal right; but I believe the whole world will deny your moral right. I know that, as you have stated, you are irresponsible by law, and can reject without assigning a reason. But irresponsibility is one thing in despotic Russia, and another thing in free England. No man can be irresponsible to public judgment in the exercise of a solemn public trust.

Nor can I subject another friend to the chance of your discovering, as in Mr. Maclean's case, a ground of objection in the circumstance of his taking pupils; or, as in Mr. Tower's case, in the fact of his having had the misfortune to vote against you an indefinite number of years ago. Lastly, I will not subject any gentleman again to the indignity of being asked for guarantees for conduct, or willingness to support, blindfold, the particular societies which you choose to name.

I have the honor to be, reverend sir, your obedient servant,

FRED. W. ROBERTSON.

Mr. Wagner won his legal victory. Mr. Robertson gave up the contest, and went home to die. He could bear no more. The endless committee meetings and correspondence harassed a frame already worn out, and all chance of recovery became hopeless.

I am really and seriously unwell (he writes); more so, I think, than even the doctors say; for the prostration of every kind of power has been too complete and too permanent to mean nothing, as there is no distinct cause. Do not put it down to hypochondria. I can endure any pain, and am not afraid of any future; but the entire inability to do any work, physical or mental, without exhaustion which is intolerable, appalls me. To such suffering as I have borne for months death would be a very welcome relief.

No defense worthy of the name was put forward by Mr. Wagner. No one can say that he knew what he was doing,

or had any idea of what Mr. Robertson would suffer; it was incapability, not animosity, of feeling. He did not know that his brother minister was dying, but he did believe that his own dignity had been hurt; and, alas! he could not see that there are times when the resentment of a personal injury is a public injustice, and the exercise of a legal right a moral wrong.

Nevertheless, as if these excuses had not existed, the indignation in Brighton was extreme. To so great a height, indeed, did it rise, that assuredly, had he known of it, Mr. Robertson would have endeavored to check its violence; but he was closely confined to his room—forbidden either to read the papers or to see his friends. It was all over for him—happily enough; the ceaseless contest against underhand slander on one side, and open opposition on the other. Little did he now care for the gentlest praise or the loudest blame. It was a curious and sorrowful contrast to turn from Brighton and its excitement on this matter—from the papers in the columns of which appeared letter after letter, some violent, some satirical, and few moderate—from the angry discussions in public and in private, every one almost taking one side or another—to turn from these things and enter the stillness of the sick-room where the unwilling cause of all this lay, his life ebbing slowly from him in bitter and unremitting pain.

The only history which can be given of the last two sad months of his life is from his own pen, in the following short and hurried letters. Nothing can be more pitiable to look at than the handwriting. Few men wrote so clear and fair a hand. But the last ten or twelve of these records would seem to have been written by one who had just been delivered from the rack. Every stroke of the pen zigzags with the feebleness of pain:

June 20.

I received your letter this morning with many thanks. I am unfit to write, though a trifle better. I have scarcely manhood enough to hold a pen. I was forbidden to do any duty yesterday, and spent the day in listlessness and semi-dozing. The Confirmation candidates must be prepared, and it is my duty. They may be empty, unmeaning girls, but so most girls are—and among people of this character the chief part of ministerial lies, for the simple reason that others are the exception; and if we are only to teach and preach to those who have much meaning in them, I fear schools and churches must be shut up. If I prepare them now, I may get away with a better grace in August; if not, I must either return a little after that time, or leave this important part of my duty at sixes and sevens, with a fair cause for grumbling on the part of parents, and for running all over the town to different clergymen to prepare them, subject to the question in each case, "Why does not your own minister prepare them?" Now it is foolish to defy public opinion. Prime Ministers can not do it; the only man who can is the man



who has neither profession nor public duty. Every one else has to pay a certain price for his office, from the throne to the parish-constable, and he must either submit to those restrictions and penalties, however galling, which are shared by all, or else give up his office.

I do dislike Brighton, but it is my present sphere, and I must make the best of it. The ministry is nowhere a bed of roses; and if there were so delectable a spot, it is not open for me to change to instead of this. It is a wise man's duty to try to work within his limitations in the best way he can, and grumble as little as possible; or else cut himself asunder at once from all restrictions and obligations, by giving up his sphere of work entirely. What makes it, too, all the more difficult in my case is, that I am a marked man: and, whether it be notoriety or popularity, no one on whom others' eyes are fixed in affection, or in malicious watchfulness for a false step, can emancipate himself from the necessity of caution, or take his own will for his law, when Will merely means unbridled course of inclination. Duty must cut public opinion boldly against the grain, if necessary; but if any one assumes for inclination the same rights, and does what he likes because he likes, in defiance of public opinion, he must first secure the indemnity accorded to unfeigned eccentricity, or else must pay the penalty without murmuring. Now I acknowledge I am not invulnerable to slanders—I know no one who is—nor am I a man to whom the world will accord impunity. Even in to-day's "Gazette" there is a long, vulgar, dull lampoon upon my views, which, wretched and ignorant as it is, is yet irritating.

July 2.

Thank you for your kind invitation to go to your house, but I had hoped to be well enough to go through the Confirmation work. Since then I do not think you have any idea how ill I have been. Even yesterday it took me fifty-five minutes, with rests, to walk to the Vales; I could not walk back. A tradesman, unknown, came out and offered me a seat in his shop. A poor man offered me his arm; and so my looks can not have been either fascinating or herculean. Life has been for a month one long pain and languor; the lower extremities were partially paralyzed, so that I dragged them after me. At night, sleepless pain; by day, change of powerlessness from two chairs to the sofa, and from the sofa to the ground.

I am not a bit stronger or better, except that I can sit up and write. Recovery is much more tedious than I expected; still I hope to be all right before long. Sometimes, in powerless moments, I am tempted to think that my work is done; I do not mean life, for that will go on long enough, but all work of thought, energy—all except the mean work of attending to health. At other times things do not look so bad. Anyhow, the lesson that *will* get itself learnt is a good one; and the truest view of life has always seemed to me to be that which shows that we are here not to enjoy but to learn.

July 8.

I send you a letter of Faraday's, published in "The Times," which gave me pleasure, because it assigns, almost in my words, precisely the same origin to table-turning, etc., which I had discovered; because, too, the principle of the test invented by Faraday is exactly the same as that which I applied to Rutter's imaginary discovery, and because his remarks at the end coincide with the opinion which I have so often expressed about the false and ignorant state of the public mind which these endless credulities and restlessnesses betoken. On this I could, and some day will, say much, but I can scarcely get strength to guide my pen. I am sentenced finally to abstinence from duty for six months. The lower extremities, for several days, were in a state of semi-paralysis, but Taylor said: "We think we can make a cure of you, but you will have hard work; you are thoroughly broken." Nevertheless, I am better, having had four Sundays' rest.

Pray let me have Faraday's letter back again. It did me more good than blisters, morphine, quinine, steel, or any thing else which they give me. Sound, genuine, healthy, scientific truth, instead of the sickly craving after mysteries and preternaturalism that marks the idler classes, now. It is the same state of feeling as that blamed in Scripture, as "the seeking after wizards that peep and mutter," "seeking after a sign," etc.—a state neither scientific nor religious.

Almost to the last he did not expect to die. No one, however, can feel otherwise than thankful that God mercifully emancipated him, for his brain was mortally injured. The disease was supposed to be abscess in the cerebellum.

He became at times partially paralyzed, and his emaciation was as pitiful as his infantine feebleness. The pain he endured was so intense that even he said, "I would not pass the horrors of last night again for half a lifetime." But worse to him than the pain was the prostration of all mental force, the obliteration of large spaces from the memory, and the loss of all power of attention. He retained, however, to the last his deep delight in the beauty of God's world. He got up once, when scarcely able to move, at four o'clock, and crept to the window "to see the beautiful morning." His hope and trust in his Heavenly Father never failed during this dreadful time. He felt assured of his immortality in Christ. A night or two before he died he dreamt that his two sisters, long since dead, came to crown him. "I saw them," he said, earnestly. Nothing could be more touching than his patience, thoughtfulness for others, and the exquisite and tender gratitude which he showed towards those who attended on him.

Those who had injured him he not only forgave, but was anxious that all justice should be done them. At the very moment when all around thought that he was dying, he asked, in reference to Mr. Wagner, "Is there any thing printed which requires my interference?"

Now and then he rallied, slept a little, and woke, as he said, "bathed in the morning sunshine, and feeling that recovery was possible." At these moments his healthy temperament reasserted itself, and he seems to have wished to live longer.

The following letter was written in the beginning of August; but the rally he mentions was but temporary. The terrible pain baffled every effort of the physicians, and he sank rapidly from day to day.

August.

I take advantage of the first rally to write a few lines to you to give an account of myself. Yesterday, after a few hours' sleep, I had a sudden and surprising rally; and though I am as weak as water, and can scarcely move a few yards without sighing and sobbing like a baby, I do trust in God I

have turned the corner. Such an illness I never had before, and hope never to have again. For twenty-four hours I thought all was over, and Dr. Allen frankly told me he had ceased to be sanguine of my recovery.

I was obliged to give up writing from exhaustion. I try again. <sup>2 P.M.</sup> How far the brain is injured God only knows. It is the great *ganglia* or bunches of nerves which are at the roots of the brain that are affected. For many days I have not stirred from my bed, and a hideous-looking ourang-outang I am. Taylor, Whitehouse, Allen—the latter twice, Taylor once—every day; and, as if that were not enough, they have sent for Watson from town. He will be here this evening. God has treated me very mercifully. That I have felt in the direst pain and deepest exhaustion—the house filled with delicacies, presents which I can not use, however. How different from the lot of Him who would fain “have slaked his morning hunger on green figs!” I have not been allowed to see any one. Lady Byron left a sick-bed ten days ago to come to see me, and I have only once conversed with her for three minutes. Again I am dizzy, and must stop. I am broken as I never was before; but by God’s mercy I may recover permanently now—nay, even rapidly.

August 12.

I have grown worse and worse every day for the last fortnight. From intensity of suffering in the brain, and utter powerlessness and prostration too dreadful to describe, and the acknowledged anxiety of the medical men, I think now that I shall not get over this. His will be done! I write in torture.

These were the last words he ever wrote. Three days afterwards, on Sunday, the 15th of August, at the age of thirty-seven—in the prime of early manhood—he died. At his own chapel, that morning, when the rumor went round that there was no hope, and God was besought to hear the prayer for him and all sick persons, many wept bitterly; but the greater part of those who loved and venerated him were stunned beyond the power of weeping. That which they greatly feared had come upon them.

The same night his spirit left them. He had passed through the day without intenser suffering than usual. He was moved from his bed to the sofa, near the open window, where he lay until the evening. But towards ten o’clock a change took place. The pain returned with bitter violence. Feebly crying at intervals, “My God, my Father—my God, my Father!” he lived for two hours in a mortal agony, during which he never lost clear consciousness. His mother, wife, and one friend, with his physician, watched over him with devoted care. At last they sought to relieve him by changing his position. But he could not endure a touch. “I can not bear it,” he said; “let me rest. I must die. Let God do His work.” These were his last words. Immediately afterwards, at a few minutes past midnight, all was over.

So lived and so died, leaving behind him a great legacy of thought, a noble gentleman, a Christian minister. To the

tenderness of a true woman he joined the strong will and the undaunted courage of a true man. With an intellect at home in all the intricacies of modern thought, he combined the simple spirit of a faithful follower of Christ. To daring speculation he united severe and practical labor among men. Living above the world, he did his work in the world. Ardently pursuing after liberty of thought, he never forgot the wise reticence of English conservatism. He preserved, amid a fashionable town, the old virtues of chivalry. In a very lonely and much-tried life he was never false or fearful. Dowered with great gifts of intellect, he was always humble; dowered with those gifts of the heart which are peculiarly perilous to their possessor, he never became their slave. He lived troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed: always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body. He died, giving up his spirit with his last words, in faith and resignation to his Father.

He lies in a hollow of the Downs he loved so well. The sound of the waves may be heard there in the distance; and standing by his grave, it seems a fair and fitting requiem; for if the inquietude of the sea was the image of his outward life, its central calm is the image of his deep peace of activity in God. He sleeps well; and we, who are left alone with our love and his great result of work, can not but rejoice that he has entered into his Father's rest.

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#### HIS FUNERAL.

It was wished by his surviving relatives that the funeral should be strictly private, but they could not resist the general desire of Brighton to record its sorrow. It was understood, also, that his congregation was anxious to express the feeling of its loss. The members of the local literary societies, of the Mechanics' Institute, the Athenæum, and the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows, severally met, voted addresses of condolence to his family, and asked permission to walk in procession after the remains of their friend and teacher. The funeral took place on Monday, the 2d of August. It resembled more a public than a private mourning. All the shops along the way from Montpelier Road to the Extramural Cemetery, as well as many in the most frequented streets of Brighton, were closed. The pavements and balconies were crowded with sorrowing spectators. The principal

townsmen assumed mourning. All the ministers of the Established Church then in Brighton, and the ministers of the Dissenting congregations, met the funeral procession at the gate of the cemetery. More than two thousand persons followed.

There were united around his tomb, by a common sorrow and common love, Jews, Unitarians, Roman Catholics, Quakers, and Churchmen; the working-men, the tradesmen, and the rank and wealth of Brighton. For once—and it was a touching testimony to the reality of his work—all classes and all sects merged their differences in one deep feeling.

They have raised above him a simple and massive monument. On two of its sides there are bronze medallions—one given by his congregation, the other by the working-men of Brighton. They record, in touching words, the gratitude of thousands.\* The thoughtful affection of the working-men

\* It may interest some to read the inscriptions placed on Mr. Robertson's Tomb; on the window in Brasenose College; and on the bust in the Bodleian.

On his Tomb, by his Congregation and Friends:

M.S.

THE REV. FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON, M.A.,

PERPETUAL CURATE OF TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON,

Born 3d of February, 1816;

Died 15th of August, 1853.

HONOURED AS A MINISTER, BELOVED AS A MAN,  
HE AWAKENED THE HOLIEST FEELINGS IN POOR AND RICH, IN IGNORANT AND LEARNED;  
THEREFORE IS HE LAMENTED, AS THEIR GUIDE AND COMFORTER,  
BY MANY WHO, IN THE BOND OF BROTHERHOOD, AND IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE,  
HAVE ERECTED THIS MONUMENT.

GLORY TO THE SAVIOUR, WHO WAS HIS ALL.

By the Working-men:

TO THE REV. F. W. ROBERTSON, M.A.,

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS SYMPATHY, AND IN DEEP SORROW FOR THEIR LOSS,  
THE MEMBERS OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTION, AND THE  
WORKING-MEN OF BRIGHTON,  
HAVE PLACED THIS MEDALLION ON THEIR BENEFACTOR'S TOMB  
A.D. 1855.

On the memorial window in Brasenose College Chapel:

FREDERICO GULIELMO ROBERTSON,

ACADEMICI ET AMICI, A.D. 1861.

Above, on a scroll:

TE DEUM LAUDAT PROPHETARUM LAUDABILIS NUMERUS.

On the bust in the Bodleian Gallery:

IN MEMORIAM FREDERICI GULIELMI ROBERTSON,  
AMICI POSUERE.

Natus 1816.—Obiit 1853.

has intrusted to a committee of four the task of keeping, even in winter, flowers always blooming on his grave. They speak to many, who make their pilgrimage to the spot, of the fair immortality which is given to the faithful Soldier of Jesus Christ.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

Robertson's personal Appearance.—Is he to be judged from his Letters or his Sermons?—His passionate Heart and inquiring Intellect.—Necessity of Self-expression.—The Work of his Life.—Results of his Preaching; of his Labor among the Working-men.—Results of his Life and Teaching as a Clergyman; as the Uniter of Parties; the fearless Speaker; the prudent Christian; the individual Thinker.—Accused of Latitudinarianism and Faithlessness to the Church of England.—The unexampled Circulation of his Sermons.—Recognition of the Value of his Work since his Death.—Subscription at his Funeral.—Bust erected in the Pavilion; in the Bodleian.—Memorial Window at Brasenose.—Farewell.

THE portrait at the beginning of this book gives but an inadequate idea of Frederick Robertson's personal appearance. It is a photograph taken from a daguerreotype, and it has imparted a set and rigid form to features which were remarkable for their changing play of expression. The high and intellectual brow, strongly marked, suggested a thoughtful and an artistic nature; and the blue, deep-set eyes, full of a beautiful pure light, flashing often with a bright and eager lightning of excitement or inquiry, told of the strangely-mingled qualities which lay within—Will, Tenderness, and Courage. The instinctive cheerfulness and sensitiveness of his temperament appeared in a mouth the smile of which was as radiant as its mobile obedience to every change of emotion was wonderful. The same flexibility, brightness, and charm of character were expressed in his slight elastic form, which, capable of great activity and endurance, seemed to be always inspired with the fire of the thought which possessed him at the time.

The personal advantages with which he was endowed added to his effectiveness in the pulpit. Sometimes, however, they seemed to subtract from it. The very refined face and air, the peculiar—sometimes startling—modulations of the voice, the apparently studied manner, made many, who for the first time heard him preach, condemn him as an "exquisite," and fancy that he affected the theatrical graces of a popular preacher. It is impossible to conceive any thing more abhorrent to his nature. For instance, he was accustomed, when commencing his closing address with the words, "My Christian brothers," to lean forward and allow his

right hand to hang carelessly over the desk. On seeing this characteristic attitude reproduced in one of the portraits made of him when at Brighton, he said to a friend, "Surely I am never guilty of that?" On being told that it was often adopted, he replied, "It shall never be so again." This anecdote marks the man. So far from using any conscious art, tricks of oratory, or effeminate mannerisms to recommend his preaching, he sternly checked the flow of his eloquence when it tended towards redundancy, and refrained even from instinctive gesture. So far from seeking popular admiration, he would have gladly accepted obscure work in an East-End London parish, among the lowest poor, if circumstances had enabled him to leave Brighton.

It may be asked whether the truest conception of what he was can be gained from his Letters or from his Sermons. The best reply is, that the Sermons picture what he strove to be, what he was when he felt and acted best, what he would have been had his life been less vexed, his heart less fiery, and his brain less attacked by disease. Of the Letters, some represent him in his happiest and most intellectual moments; others in times of physical weariness, when both intellect and heart were pained with trouble, and beset with questions too hard for him to solve completely; and a few, as in those written from the Tyrol, when his whole being was convulsed in the crisis of a great religious change. They relate his inward trials; his Sermons bear witness to his contest and his victory. Only when both are read, and balanced one against the other, can an adequate conception be formed of what he was. On account of the overstrained self-depreciation which sometimes possessed him, especially after the intellectual excitement of Sunday, it is not possible to take his own estimation of himself in his letters as representing the whole truth.

No man ought to be judged by his own record of his inner life—no man ought to be judged entirely out of his own mouth. Far from being too lenient, men of Mr. Robertson's temper are too severe upon themselves. They write in deep pain, from the impulse of the moment; and then, when they have got rid of the pain by its expression, pass out of their study into an out door life of such activity and vigor, that no one would imagine that an hour before they had been writing as if they were useless in their generation, and their existence a burden too galling to be borne.

On reading his correspondence, some may accuse him of indicating too strongly his loneliness and passionate desire of sympathy; they may call his fancies diseased, his complaints unmanly, and his transient doubts unchristian. But

his faithlessness was but momentary: only the man who can become at one with Frederick Robertson's strange and manifold character, and can realize as he did the agony and sin of the world—only the man who can feel the deepest pain, and the highest joy, as Robertson could have felt them—has either the right or the capability of judging him. Doubts did cross his mind, but they passed over it as clouds across the sun. The glowing heart which lay behind soon dissipated them by its warmth.

With regard to his passionate desires and his complaint, they were human, and would have been humanly wrong in him only if he had allowed them to gain predominance over his will, righteously bent all through his life, not on their extinction, but on their subjugation. The untroubled heart is not the deepest, the stern heart not the noblest, the heart which crushes all expression of its pain not that which can produce the most delicate sympathy, the most manifold teaching, or speak so as to give the greatest consolation. Had not Robertson often suffered, and suffered so much as to be unable sometimes to suppress a cry, his sermons would never have been the deep source of comfort and of inspiration which they have proved to thousands. The very knowledge that one who worked out the voyage of his life so truly and so firmly, could so suffer and so declare his suffering, is calculated to console and strengthen many who endure partially his pain and loneliness, but who have not, as yet, resisted so victoriously; whose temperament is morbid, but who have not, as yet, subdued it to the loving and healthy cheerfulness of his Christian action.

Nor can those who should thus accuse him ever have conceived what that character is which *must* express itself, or ever have realized that there are times when expression is necessary if life is to continue. Such a necessity belongs almost always to the poetic temperament, and appears nowhere so much as in the Psalms. They are full of David's complaints against his destiny. They tell of his long and lonely nights, his tears, his sufferings at the hands of men, his doubts of Eternal Justice; and it is through the relief afforded by this natural expression of impassioned feeling that he gains calm enough to see into "the way of the Lord," and to close his psalms of sorrow with words of triumphant trust. It was just so with Frederick Robertson. The expression of his distress neither injured his manliness nor subtracted from his Christian faith. It was the safety-valve by which he freed himself from feeling under too high a pressure not to be dangerous, and brought himself into that bal-



anced state in which active and profitable work is possible. One of the most important things to remark in his life is, that a man may *retain* high-wrought sentiment, passionate feelings, imaginations and longings almost too transcendental, a sensitiveness so extreme as to separate him from almost all sympathy, and at the same time subdue all so as to do his Father's will in the minutest as well as the largest duties. But I repeat, without the "timely utterance which gave his thoughts relief," he could not have been strong enough to do the work of his life—a work distinctive and great, but the results of which do not lie so openly on the surface of society as to be manifest at once to the careless glance of the public. It is necessary, therefore, to close this book with some account of it.

The results of his preaching upon the intellectual men who attended his congregation have already been dwelt on. On those whose tendency was towards skepticism the effect of his sermons was remarkable. "I never hear him," said one, "without some doubt being removed, or some difficulty solved." Young men who had boasted publicly of doubts which were an inward terror to them, could not resist the attractive power of his teaching, and fled to him to disclose the history of their hearts, and to find sympathy and guidance. Nor was his influence less upon that large class whose religion grows primarily out of emotion, for he combined in himself two powers which generally weaken one another—the power of close and abstract thinking, and the power of deep and intense feeling.

The most visible portion of the labor of his life was among the working-men. He bound fifteen hundred of them together in a bond of mutual help; he united them—men of a class which is jealous of church interference—in reverence for his character as a minister and as a Christian man, while at the same time he invariably bade them look away from him to his Master.

This is a part of his work the results of which can not be calculated. No one can tell, who has not had something to do with Mechanics' Institutes, what genius, patience, charity, and width of sympathy were necessary to achieve this. His lectures, and his mode of conducting the controversy with the radical party in the Association, have had a wide and beneficial effect upon similar Associations in England, not only as an inspiration to the men, but as a warning and a guide to the promoters and committees. The fearless confidence in truth and in human nature with which he met the socialistic difficulties and skeptical opinions among the work-

ing-classes has given to clergymen who come into contact with the same classes an example and a lesson for which they have to thank him.

Of all the small band who in 1848, '49, and '50 set themselves to remedy the evils which oppressed the poor mechanic, he has had the greatest influence. At that time he saw more clearly than the others both sides of the question. His conduct was wiser, but not less bold. While in other quarters the breach between rich and poor was at least temporarily widened, in Brighton it was narrowed. By patient explanation to both sides of the temptations and trials which beset the one or the other, and by showing that there *was* a bridge across the social gulf, he drew the divided classes together, and succeeded more than any man of his time in promoting their reconciliation. He was also one of the first and most active, though one of the most unknown, advocates of the rights of laboring men to all the means of acquiring knowledge; and he held up the banner of their rights at an epoch when it was most dangerous to his own peace to do so, and most profitable for them. But his fearlessness in the cause of all freedom and justice gave him the clear insight which sees the right moment to advance, even though, as in 1848, the confusion of battle may be at its height.

As a clergyman, by his clear elucidation of the truths common to all, but lying beneath widely-differing forms of opinion, he has done much to bring about a spirit of religious union among the various parties of the Church. He has assisted, by his teaching, in the great work of this day—the preservation of the Church of England as a church in which all the members vary in views, mode of action, and character of teaching, but are one in faith, one in aim, and one in spirit; for he dreaded that genuine Low-Churchism which seeks to force upon all the members of a church a set of limited opinions about illimitable truths.

As a clergyman he has also brought distinctly forward the duty of fearlessness in speaking. "I desire for myself," he says, "that I may be true and fearless, but still more that I may mix gentleness and love with fearlessness." He was not one who held what are called liberal opinions in the study, but would not bring them into the pulpit. He did not waver between truth to himself and success in the world. He was offered advancement in the Church, if he would abate the strength of his expressions with regard to the Sabbath. He refused the proffer with sternness. Far beyond all the other perils which beset the Church was, he thought, this peril—that men who were set apart to speak

the truth and to live above the world should substitute conventional opinions for eternal truths—should prefer ease to conscience, and worldly honor to that which cometh from God only.

He has taught also by his ministerial life the duty and the practice of that Prudence which fitly balances courage. He was not one of the radicals of English polemics. His was not that spirit, too much in vogue at present among the so-called Liberal party—the spirit of Carlstadt, and not of Luther; the spirit of men who blame their leaders for not being forward enough—who desire blindly to pull down the whole edifice of “effete opinions,” and who, inspired by the ardor and by some of the folly of youth, think that they can at once root up the tares without rooting up the wheat also. Robertson, on the contrary, seems to have clearly seen, or at least to have acted as if he saw, that the question of true outward religious liberty in a national Church was to be solved in the same manner as England had solved the question of solid-set Political Liberty—by holding on to the old as long as possible, so as to retain all its good; by never embarking in the new till it had become a necessity of the age; and “by broadening slowly down from precedent to precedent,” and by recognizing the universal truth hidden in that saying, “I have many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now.” He clung, for example, to certain theories which seem incongruous with the rest of his views—which seem strange to many of us now, just because we forget that England and the Church are ten years older since his death. He refused to discuss thoroughly questions which we bring forward prominently. He purposed, for example, writing a book on Inspiration. He refrained; “the mind of England,” said he, “is not ready yet.” But if he were alive now, he would write it. I have already said that he would never bring forward in the pulpit an opinion which was only fermenting in his mind. He waited till the must became wine. He endeavored, as far as in him lay, without sacrificing truth, not to shock by startling opinions the minds of those who were resting peacefully in an “early heaven and in happy views.” He refrained in all things from violating a weak brother’s conscience. He would have hated the vaunting way with which some put forward novel views. He would have hated the pharisaical liberalism which says, “God, I thank Thee I am not as other men are, even as this believer in the universality of the Flood, or that in the eternal obligation of the Jewish Sabbath.” He would have disliked such a term as “free-handling;” and as strongly as he

reprobated the irreverent boldness of those who speak as if they were at home in all the counsels of God, would he have blamed the irreverent license with which some writers have rushed at things held sacred by thousands of our fellow-Christians.

In one respect especially his life has a lesson for the Church of this time. He has shown that a well-marked individuality is possible in the English Church. The great disadvantage of a Church like ours—with fixed traditions, with a fixed system of operation, with a theological education which is exceedingly conservative, with a manner of looking at general subjects from a fixed clerical point of view, with a bias to shelter and encourage certain definite modes of thinking—is that under its government clergymen tend to become all of one pattern. It may be said, and with truth, that the advantages of our system more than balance this disadvantage. Nevertheless, it is a disadvantage which is becoming more and more felt by clergymen and recognized by laymen. And one of the strongest impulses which have given rise to the present theological struggle is the desire of men in holy orders to become more distinctly individual. Robertson anticipated by some years this deep-set feeling. He was himself, and not a fortuitous concurrence of other men. Owing to his individuality, he retained the freedom of action and the diversity of feeling which men not only in the Church, but in every profession and business, so miserably lose when they dress their minds in the fashion of current opinion, and look at the world, at nature, and at God, through the glass which custom so assiduously smokes.

Robertson preserved his independence of thought. He had a strong idiosyncrasy, and he let it loose within the bounds of law—a law not imposed upon him from without by another, but freely chosen by himself as the best. He developed, without rejecting the help of others, his own character after his own fashion. He respected his own conscience; believed in his own native force, and in the divine fire within him. He looked first at every thing submitted to his judgment as if it were a new thing upon earth, and then permitted the judgments of the past to have their due weight with him. He endeavored to receive, without the intervention of commentators, immediate impressions from the Bible. To these impressions he added the individual life of his own heart, and his knowledge of the life of the great world. He preached these impressions, and with a freedom, independence, variety, and influence which were the legitimate children of his individuality.

That men should, within the necessary limits, follow out their own character, and refuse to submit themselves to the common mould, is the foremost need of the Age in which we live; and if the lesson which Robertson's life teaches in this respect can be received, if not by all, at least by his brethren, he will neither have acted nor taught in vain.

Of course, developing his own thoughts and life freely, he was charged by his opponents with faithlessness to the Church, and with latitudinarian opinions. But he rejoiced in finding within the Church of England room to expand his soul, and freedom for his intellect. He discovered the way to escape from the disadvantage I have mentioned, and yet to remain a true son of a Church which he loved and honored to the last. Moreover, he brought many into the Church of England; both Unitarians and Quakers, as well as men of other sects, were admitted by him into her communion. On the other hand, if the latter part of the accusation were true, and he was latitudinarian in opinion, it is at least remarkable that he should have induced in those who heard him profitably, not only a spiritual life, but also a high and punctilious morality. His hearers kept the Law all the better from being freed from the Law. And many a working-man in Brighton, many a business-man in London, many a young officer, many a traveller upon the Continent, many a one living in the great world of politics or in the little world of fashion, can trace back to words heard in Trinity Chapel the creation in them of a loftier idea of moral action, and an abiding influence which has made their lives, in all their several spheres, if not religious, at least severely moral.

These are some of the results which have flowed, and will continue to flow, from his work and his life. They have been propagated by means of his published sermons. The extension of these sermons among *all* classes has been almost unexampled. Other sermons have had a larger circulation, but it has been confined within certain circles. These have been read and enjoyed by men of every sect and of every rank. They seem to come home to that human heart which lies beneath all our outward differences. Working men and women have spoken of them to me with delight. Clergymen of the most opposed views to his keep them in their book-cases and on their desks. Dissenting preachers speak of them with praise. Men of the business-world have written to say that they have felt, in reading them, that Christianity was a power and a life, and that its spirit was that of a sound mind. Men whose intellect has been wearied with our pulpit sameness or our pulpit sentiment, light upon them and

read them through. All sections of the press—even those of such widely-separated principles as the “Guardian” and the “Westminster Review”—have expressed, even while they disagreed with their views, sympathy with their Christian feeling and noble thought. There has, however, been one conspicuous exception: the “Record” newspaper has been faithful to its nature.

Fourteen editions of his sermons have been published.\* In themselves, these figures bear testimony to the great acceptability of Mr. Robertson’s teaching. But the value of his work has been otherwise recognized. At a meeting held immediately after his death, it was resolved to raise a subscription for the purpose of testifying in some adequate manner the reverence in which his friends held his worth, and the sympathy which they wished to offer to his family. In less than a fortnight eleven hundred pounds were raised, and placed in the hands of trustees for the benefit of his children. Of this sum Lady Byron contributed three hundred pounds. The two children, who are thus connected with the love and gratitude given to their father, are still alive to cherish his name and to rejoice in his far-spread influence. His daughter is named *Ida Florence Geraldine Robertson*; and his son, *Charles Boyd Robertson*, was educated at Harrow, and, through the instrumentality of the late Lord Carlisle, obtained a nomination from Earl Russell to the Foreign Office, which he entered in January, 1865.

Since his death, other public testimonies have been made to his memory. A gentleman who had found by chance upon a friend’s table a volume of the sermons, was so touched by their beauty, that he commissioned a sculptor to execute for him a bust of the preacher. He presented this, with peculiar delicacy, to the Pavilion at Brighton, that the town in which Robertson had done the work of his life might have a lasting memorial of his presence. A few years ago, some men of his own college expressed their desire to erect in the chapel of Brasenose a window to his memory. A subscription was set on foot; many outside as well as within Oxford were glad to join in this graceful tribute, and the sun shines now through the letters of his name upon the spot where he dedicated his youth to God. Nor has the University been unmindful of one whose powers of thinking were trained within its walls: among the marble images of the great men who are honored by a place in the Bodleian, his bust is also to be seen.

\* The sermons have reached their ninth edition in America; one volume has been already translated into German, and published at Manheim.

But far beyond these outward tributes of respect, a more perennial one than all, is the epistle written by this man of God upon our hearts. That which God had given him he has left to us. His spirit lives again in others; his thoughts move many whom he never saw, on to noble ends. Unconsciously he blesses, and has blest. Yet not unconsciously now: I rejoice to think that now, at least, he is freed from the dark thought which oppressed his life—that his ministry was a failure. I rejoice to think that he knows now—in that high Land where he is doing, with all his own vividness of heart, ampler work than his weary spirit could have done on earth—that his apparent defeat here was real Victory; that through him the Spirit of all Goodness has made men more true, more loving, and more pure. His books may perish, his memory fade, his opinions be superseded, as, in God's progressive education of the Universal Church, we learn to see more clearly into Truths the relations of which are now obscure; but the Work which he has done upon human hearts is as imperishable as his own Immortality in God.





# APPENDICES.

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## APPENDIX I.

DURING the preparation of this biography, many of Mr. Robertson's personal friends have sent to me brief accounts of their relations with him, and their several estimates of his character. It has struck me that perhaps the best mode of making use of these letters is to arrange them here in an Appendix, where they can be seen together. They agree and disagree, but their very disagreement will throw light upon some of Robertson's characteristics. They are remarkable, with two exceptions, for their absence of anecdote or of any description of his external life or peculiarities. Indeed, the great difficulty of making his biography interesting is, that he seems to have impressed himself so strongly on men as the thinker—as a spiritual essence—that what he did and said in outward life fell into the shade. Every one writes about his character—few remember anecdotes in illustration of his character. He seems, if I may so express it, to have been rather *felt* than *seen* by men.

The first letter is written by a college friend, and gives an account of him which is interesting from the prominence in which it sets his youthful idealism; the second pictures vividly the impression he made at Cheltenham; the third is an extract from a letter from one of his congregation at Brighton whom he frequently visited, and gives some idea of his relation to the world of society; the fourth gives an estimate of him from a clerical point of view; the fifth is a recollection of his mode of life in a country-house; the sixth describes him as he appeared to its writer during the last year of his career; and the last, the seventh, interesting not only for the love and earnestness with which it is written, but also for the vivid description which it gives of the service in Trinity Chapel, is especially worth reading for the details which it supplies of some of the last weeks of the life of Mr. Robertson.

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### LETTER A.

Odiham Vicarage, July 28, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,—You have assigned me no easy task in asking for recollections of an old college friend, after a lapse of more than twenty years. I became acquainted with F. W. Robertson very soon after his entrance at Brasenose College, Oxford, by meeting him at the rooms of the Rev. H. B. W. Churton, at that time a fellow and tutor in the college. His ardent temperament, his vivid imagination, his earnestness and purity of mind, his lofty aspirations after whatsoever things were true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report—in short, his eager thirst for moral and intellectual improvement, rendered him a most interesting companion.

His intellect was above the common order ; and the deeper tone of thought, the naturally pensive feelings of his soul, made the mere social, festive, light-hearted circle of Oxford companionship uncongenial to his taste, and unsuited to his delicate, refined, and perhaps over-sensitive disposition.

His friends were sought among the thinking, the literary, the devout-minded, and intellectual men of his day. Light and trivial or foolish conversation was always most abhorrent to him. His idea and endeavor with respect to social enjoyment were mental gain or spiritual improvement. He was dissatisfied, and even uncomfortable, restless, and unhappy, unless from the company and society of friends he could feel that he had either derived or imparted some solid, lasting gain, either in point of information or of clearer perspicuity on any subject of abiding interest. Progress was his watch-word, improvement his aim.

Mere recreation or mere amusement were regarded by him as little better than waste of time. The common every-day talk, the joke, the sharp repartee of men fresh from public schools and elated with youthful spirits, found no sympathy in his breast, and were positively distasteful to him. He would often say, with emphasis, "To think that men should have nothing better to converse about than all this trash!" His turn of mind led him to an almost contemptuous dislike for what he called "the froth, the scum, the vanity of all these things!"

But with all this loftiness of mind, feeling, and aspiration, instead of a halo of brightness there was often a mist of sadness and disappointment hovering over his soul, which damped the ardor of his spirits and checked his jousness.

On entering on a college life, his glowing imagination had raised an ideal in his mind so high, that it could hardly fail to produce a reaction of feeling after testing the reality of actual experience. He had anticipated a more elevated standard of manners and morals than he afterwards found in existence. His preconceived notion of Oxford lectures and tutors, as well as of the society of the undergraduates and other members of the university, was a high degree of perfection and of intellectual superiority.

Every lecture was to be a concentrated mass of learning, every tutor a paragon of excellence ; every party and every social circle in Oxford were to be redolent with wit, powerful in logical argument, abounding in scientific and philosophical conversation.

His own pure, noble, and lofty wishes were partly parental to the idea ; and then his soaring spirit, his fervid imagination, painted up that preconceived idea in colors too bright, too vivid for earth. He had looked for an Italian sky, and for the sunny genial warmth, as it were, of an Italian climate ; but he found, amid much that was bright and beautiful, fogs and vapors intermingled, which he had not anticipated. He met with storms as well as sunshine. The lesson was a painful one, but most profitable. While it somewhat damped the glow of his heart, and cast a tinge of melancholy over his soul, it rendered him a more practical man—it led him to see that here we must be satisfied to fight our way onward through difficulties, darkness, and misunderstandings.

This was the secret, this was the origin of that strain of sorrowful, disappointed feeling which runs through his sermons. It was the language of one who had learned by sorrowful experience that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and this fitted him in a peculiar manner to address with power those who, still absorbed in the world's busy and engaging round of business and pleasures, had not as yet been taught the same lesson. He spake the things which he had seen and heard and felt, and there was consequently a telling influence in what he said. I well remember on one occasion, after gathering around him a breakfast-party of reading and rising men—men of acknowl-

edged intelligence and information—the distress and almost disgust with which, subsequent to the breaking up of the party, he commented upon the tone of the conversation, which had not risen so high, or proved so intellectual and improving, as he had anticipated from the class and character of the men selected for invitation.

He would make little or no allowance for the feeling of desire, in hard-working and reading men, for relief from severe studies in the social enjoyment of free unconstrained intercourse. He could not sympathize with them in the buoyant ebullition of youthful spirits, which must have its fling. But this turn of thought and tone of mind were in another respect a hindrance to the success of his university course, with regard to obtaining the honors to which his talents would undoubtedly have entitled him, if he could only have brought his mind to exercise those powers in the ordinary way necessary for securing academical honors. He could not bring himself to descend to all the minute accuracies of grammar and of philological lore essential to form a finished scholar. It was the same with many of the technicalities and minutiae of science, without which the knowledge required for the examination-schools could not be mastered. To spend precious hours upon such comparative trifles appeared to him a waste of valuable time and of mental powers as well. He felt disappointed that the examinations should depend, in a manner, upon an accurate acquaintance with all these elements, these little niceties of language, these minute points and distinctions in philological, scientific, and philosophical subjects; instead of depending merely upon enlarged views, original ideas, and exalted sentiments arising out of a comprehensive and intellectual grasp of such matters by a reasoning and powerful mind. In preference, therefore, to fettering the mind, as he considered, by working in the tramway marked out for honors in the wisdom of the university, he allowed others of inferior powers to pass by him, and to attain those rewards of diligence and mental cultivation while he was climbing over the rocks on a path of his own.

I remember on one occasion the great disgust he expressed at a man of very superior mind and of undoubted talent being actually plucked in the public schools at the final examination for lack of technical information and want of accuracy, while he saw the testamur handed to many others of inferior powers of mind, who had earned it by common care, industry, and perseverance. He did not at that time perceive how much of valuable training, disciplining, and strengthening the mind, as well as of increasing its natural endowments, were involved in all this minuteness and accuracy of detail.

Thus the very brilliancy of his talents proved a stumbling-block in the way of his carrying off those rewards which his friends would have desired for him, and which they saw, under ordinary circumstances, might undoubtedly have been made his own. Neither academical honors nor Oxford society came up to the high standard he had preconceived, and his thoughts were then directed onwards to the great work of the ministry, and to preparation for it. His exalted notions of Holy Orders and of the high privileges and blessings in connection with the office of the ministry in the Church, again led him to look forward with zest and pleasurable anticipation to coming spiritual and intellectual enjoyment; and although there was much of this in his after-course, yet even here he experienced in the actual reality that “Hope told a flattering tale.”

Upon the subject of religion, his inquiring mind was always in search of truth. With an early education in what is termed the Evangelical school, he brought an unbiased and unprejudiced spirit to bear upon this all-important matter.

In Oxford he was an attentive and diligent hearer of teachers and preachers differing considerably in views and sentiments. He attended the minis-

try, on the one hand, of Mr. Champneys at St. Ebbe's, and, on the other hand, of Mr. Newman at St. Mary's. He had as yet marked out for himself no distinctive line of religious sentiments, but the earnest, anxious question of his mind was, "What is truth?"

He saw much that struck him as excellent and desirable in both parties. He felt keenly, moreover, that there were deficiencies in each. He wished to amalgamate what he saw that was good, excellent, and scriptural in one system with what he saw to be devotional and stricter in form and discipline in another. He desired, with an enlarged mind and unprejudiced spirit, to embrace the excellences of both, without becoming addicted to either—without allowing himself to be a party-man.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.

But the tendencies of his mind as well as his early training led him to lean more to the tenets and doctrines of the Reformers. He took special delight also in scriptural and Greek Testament readings, and in devotional exercises afforded him and others, from time to time, in Mr. Churton's rooms. These seasons often proved a solace to his anxious and restless spirit: they refreshed his soul by leading him directly to the fountain of wisdom and consolation.

He derived much advantage, moreover, from the instructions of the senior tutor in the college—soon after the vice-principal of Brasenose, the Rev. T. T. Churton. From him he frequently received most friendly cautions and warnings with regard to the dangers and erratic tendencies of Tractarianism, as it gradually unfolded and developed itself into its distinctive features. In his rooms he often fell in with kindred spirits to himself, and greatly enjoyed the friendly and social gatherings of dons and under-graduates brought together by Mr. Churton's kindness and hospitality.

He was greatly indebted to the instructions of this valuable tutor for the views and sentiments which he carried with him from Oxford into the ministry, and from which he did not diverge until after the close of his ministry in Cheltenham and the commencement of his labors in Brighton.

Yours very sincerely,

T. G. CLARKE, *Vicar of Odiham.*

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#### LETTER B.

Lansdown Lodge, Cheltenham, February 21, 1865.

DEAR SIR,—I have already explained to you that I was not intimately acquainted with the Rev. F. Robertson. My intercourse with him was casual and limited. Occasionally I met him in private society, and entertaining, as I did from the first, the greatest admiration of his character and abilities, never lost an opportunity of conversing with him. But he was so much engaged in the performance of his duties, as the curate of a large district in this town, that these opportunities were few and far between; and thus, I regret to say, I can do little towards the elucidation of the comparatively short period of his life during which I had the privilege of personal communication with him, beyond giving a general description of the main points in his character as they appeared to me.

I always considered that he possessed, in a remarkable and pre-eminent degree, a combination of three qualities—courage, gentleness, and liberality or tolerance. As regards the first, I believe him to have been, both physically and morally, one of the bravest men that ever lived. Had it been his lot to have followed the military profession (for which I have understood he was originally intended), he would probably, with opportunities, have attained the highest eminence in it. His presence was commanding, though his figure was

slight, and his dark eye glanced with a mixture of fire and softness which indicated at once that he was no ordinary man. There was nothing which he would have shrunk from saying or doing in the interest of truth or justice, for either of which he would willingly have undergone martyrdom.

At the same time his gentleness was as great as his courage. Even the very tones of his voice bespoke the fact. Conscious of his great and commanding abilities, he must have been conscious too (for he had proof of it in their acts) of the bitter jealousy which his superiority excited in the minds of some of those with whom he had to deal. But notwithstanding his extreme sensitiveness, which must have made him feel deeply the treatment he received, no acrimonious expression, so far as I am aware, ever escaped his lips; and the tone in which he spoke of these things was ever that of one who prayed that his enemies might be forgiven, as not knowing what they did. He was totally devoid of pride or assumption; and though his mind was stored with thoughts on every subject usually discussed by thinking men, he was as ready, perhaps more ready, to listen than to speak. But when he did speak, you felt at once that he was speaking from the heart; what he said was plainly and simply expressed, as might be expected where the speaker was candid and sincere, free from affectation, egotism, or pedantry of any kind.

But perhaps the grandest features of his character were liberality and toleration. He was an ardent seeker after truth, and, having found it, would have defended it with his life. But if ever a man was aware of the difficulty of finding truth, it was he; if ever a man was aware of his own and others' fallibility, it was he. It may be doubted whether, in the whole of his writings, a single word, or a single expression, can be found displaying a spirit of dogmatism or denunciation. Possibly the natural liberality of his mind may have been encouraged and increased by the antagonism which he felt to the intense bigotry of which he was not unfrequently a witness. Exemplifications of this spirit of liberality, the more remarkable as being in opposition to the common prejudices of many around him, may be found in those of his sermons which treat of the "Sunday Question," in his remarks on Shelley in the "Lectures on Poetry," and in the fact, which I well remember, that when, many years since, a renegade Roman Catholic priest visited Cheltenham for the purpose of pouring forth loud-tongued and reckless abuse upon the religion he had forsworn—when he was attended and listened to by admiring and sympathetic crowds, however unable to comprehend the Italian language in which he spoke—no persuasion would induce Robertson to follow in the wake. With a pleasant smile he would ask what weight could be attached to the ravings of a Protestant priest who had deserted *his* religion—a question to which I am not aware that he ever received a reply.

When he died, I believe that they who had had the privilege of knowing him even so slightly as I did, felt that a man was gone who had been, and would have continued to be, a light to the world; and who, if not in a worldly, certainly in a spiritual and intellectual sense, would have reached an eminence as high as has been attained by any of the greatest men that England ever saw. For his intellect was ever expanding, and it may be doubted whether, when he was removed, that intellect had attained its full development and possible maturity. Even during the period during which I knew him here, attending the church in which he preached, there was a marked progress in his power of thought, expression, and delivery.

I may add, as a very subordinate point, that from specimens which I have seen of his Greek composition, evincing exquisite taste and great grammatical accuracy, there seems little doubt that he might have attained the highest academical distinction. But he felt that he was destined for higher and better things than running in an academical groove, and becoming even a

great classical scholar. I mention the fact, not as thinking thereby to add any thing to the lustre of his intellectual character, but because I am unwilling to omit any thing known to me regarding him.

I should have been glad if I could have made this short and imperfect sketch more adequate to the subject with which I have attempted to deal. But having been requested to contribute something to so grand an object as the elucidation of the character of such a man, I could not, in justice either to the living or the dead, refuse—even though the contribution were, as it is, but a mite.

His saltem accumullem donis, et fungar inani  
Munere.

I am, dear sir, faithfully yours,

W. DOBSON.

### LETTER C.

#### EXTRACT.

Brighton.

He used to fight continually on the "Woman's Right" question, and I used to delight in rousing his ire by one or two things he detested—by making a casual use of slang, by dashing my words in writing, by punning, in which latter delinquency he used himself to indulge at times. I do not think he was ever humorous so much as witty—not that I attempt to define the much-vexed difference between wit and humor—but I should say that his fun shone and sparkled rather than warmed and glowed; and ever and anon—and almost always when one got in earnest—there rose up that tinge of bitterness which seemed to underlie all his estimate of human character and events. His own experience, I suppose, was at war with his aspirations. This struggle, I fancy, was what made him so painfully interesting. I used to think, especially when I first knew him, that his conversation was pitched in too high a key for general society, and he certainly wanted that little vulgar social sympathy which harmonizes all by tuning one's self only to the "third" above and not to the "octave."

He read out better than ever man read; he never preached but he always elevated and spiritualized every subject, and I never met any one so deferential and gentle in argument: he never pooh-poohed a remark, but always listened and carried on our remarks—never forced on us more than we seemed likely to take in comfortably. He had the rare art of giving comfort, advice, and even blame, with such almost humble gentleness, such entire freedom from any assumption of superiority, that it could not wound the sorest heart, nor irritate even the most rebellious spirit.

I think a touch of geniality or of sensuousness would have improved his character, but perhaps my materialistic tendency misleads me there, and a tinge of asceticism may be a necessary element in all apostleship.

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The following letter of Mr. Robertson's will illustrate some of the points dwelt on in the above extract: his gentleness in refusal, his impatience with fruitless enthusiasm, his stern views of the world, and his feelings on the subject of the "Rights of Women:"

DEAR MADAM,—I regret exceedingly to be unable to take the part you ask me to do in obtaining signatures to Lord Shaftesbury's petition. I should be sorry that my refusal should be construed into want of sympathy in this great cause of charity and right, or into inability to appreciate warmly and admiringly the motives of ladies who like yourself have signed the paper. His would be a cold heart, indeed, who did not acknowledge proudly and grate-

fully the promptness of his countrywomen to feel rightly on all great questions, and to join in all generous works. But I humbly venture to differ from Lord Shaftesbury as to the expediency of this pressing mode of attempting to meet the evil.

First, it is known to be the result of a burst of feeling produced by a book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which by thousands in America is considered an exaggerated statement of the case, and has produced much exasperation of feeling in the Southern States. I do not believe it to be exaggerated: it merely exhibits what under such laws is forever possible, and must be often fact. But the Americans deny it; and in the heated state of feeling produced by the book I fear that a remonstrance known to be grounded on its allegations, or roused by its pictures of slavery, would produce resentment instead of conviction, and only harden the American ladies in their resolve to maintain the institution. For, strange to say, it is the American ladies—for ladies are conservatives ever of the things that be—who are said to be most vehement in the upholding of the institution: the ladies and the clergy—for, alas! the appeal on Christian grounds which the address contains has been answered, they say, already a thousand times by the arguments with which the clergy have indoctrinated the slave-holders and their wives and daughters. Of this there are abundant traces in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

In the first place, I feel convinced that the American reply will be: Look at home—look at Ireland—look at the pauperism of England, more frightful than slavery! What are the high-born ladies of England doing who saunter life away in Belgravia and Tyburnia, leaving their own slaves uncared for, stimulated by a novel into a burst of virtuous indignation which costs them nothing beyond the trouble of signing a paper and the pleasurable excitement of the agitation, and pledges them to nothing beyond the easy task of calling on others to do good? I know that to hundreds who will sign the address this will not apply, but I confess that even I, an Englishman, should be forced to acknowledge it to be a fair retort to thousands.

Once more, you will forgive me for saying that while I hope earnestly for an increasing dignity and breadth to be given to the position of woman by the spirit of the Gospel, I am not yet quite American enough to feel quite reconciled to the idea of the public conferences and agitations and excitement which a measure like this involves in the female world. I do not put this forward as a real objection, I admit it to be perhaps an old-fashioned prejudice, and if there were no other objection, it should not stand in the way of my co-operating in a good cause. My only excuse for this long letter is my wish not to appear discourteous or abrupt in declining to comply with your request. I am, dear madam, your obedient servant,

F. W. R.

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#### LETTER D.

MY DEAR SIR,—As I understand your letter, you ask me to add something to the materials now being collected for a "Life of Robertson." I wish I could send something worthy of such an object; but my incapability of writing all that I feel about him is my fair excuse for not giving more than what follows. It is right, at the same time, that I remind you that my friendship with him was, strictly speaking, a clerical friendship, and that he hardly ever spoke to me upon any other subject than that which directly or indirectly touched upon a clergyman's duties.

First of all, I will declare that, though he was not faultless any more than other human beings, he was, without exception, the most faultless clergyman I have ever known. It is easy to trace how this comparative clerical faultlessness had its original spring—in (1) his strict obedience to his father's

will that he should take Holy Orders and sacrifice the Army, in which his heart was ; and (2) in his exceeding truthfulness of character. These two points ran through his life—Self-sacrifice and truth. “If I am to be a clergyman,” was the language of his thoughts, “I will do my best to be a clergyman in reality, even though I have no preference for the profession.” With this determination before him, he told me he prepared for ordination, and, amongst other studies, before he left college he literally learnt by heart the whole of the New Testament, not only in English but in Greek ; and so completely did he devote himself to stiff theological study for the examination of the Bishop of Winchester, that he sought relaxation to his mind before the day of ordination by reading Wordsworth’s “Excursion” as his orisons. “Some clergymen,” he said, “would think it strange to do this. It was my refreshment.”

His favorite private prayer-book was Bishop Andrewes’s “Devotions,” which he used until he found his wants more perfectly expressed by the language of his own copiously flowing thoughts. His love for the Holy Bible was exceedingly remarkable, and especially for those parts which are (as he expressed it himself) full of Christ ; and it is worth recording that, upon one occasion, he remarked to me that the longer he lived the more fond he became of turning to the four Gospels by preference—a fact borne out by the list of his sermons.

But Robertson was pre-eminently the clergyman of thought. He would wring his very brain for the sake of those pure thoughts which abound throughout his writings. And yet it was not for the sake of exalting the intellect above religion that he did this, but in order to make the fullest use of the great faculties which God had blessed him withal. I was curate of Hurstpierpoint in 1851, and, having at heart the opening of a parish reading-room, I applied to my friend to assist me with an address. His generosity encouraged the request, but it was with difficulty that I could prevail upon him to sacrifice any time from his congregation. “My congregation must come first,” he repeated ; and then he rapidly sketched the amount of work which was demanded of him, in order that I might understand his sermons to be the chief object of his work—not his lectures, because intellect ought to bend to Christianity.

I am not fustian in my language of him when I say that the spirit of Christ saturated every thing he said and did. For my own part, I have never learnt so much of the mind of Christ, and what is meant by following Christ, as from him. Like his *Master* (as he fearlessly loved to call the Saviour, in whatever company he was) he had two distinct sides to his character. Perfectly conscious of his great mental powers, and very modest about introducing them except where plain duty obliged him, he was ready to acknowledge excellence and rarity of endowments in every one who possessed them, and to judge of others who had them not in a kindly spirit. There was a *daring* in him to speak what he was persuaded was truth, which was quite unsubject to the good or bad opinions of the world. Yet this fearlessness was always governed by a most *generous* charity. If he mentioned the name of any one whose life offended him, he was sure to make me see the good in the person as well as the vice. If he spoke of any one who differed with him in religion, he was bent upon my seeing that he loved the individual while he hated his false faith. To the Church of England he was affectionately attached : he regarded it as the best form of Christianity in the world, but he would never refuse to recognize what was true and good in those outside it. I well remember the substance of his words in conversation with me on this point : “There is only *one* thing we have to wage a perpetual war with—sin and wrong, in whomsoever found—Churchman, Roman Catholic, or Protestant Dissenter. There is only *one* thing we should wish to see either in ourselves or in others



—the love of Christ; and in whomsoever a *spark* merely of this love is found, whether in one whom we have regarded as awfully wicked, or in one whom we have looked on as not enjoying the same superior light with ourselves—one branded by the hard name of Papist, or a Greek, or a Dissenter, or an Arian; if in any of these the love of Christ is found, showing itself in the adoration and the worship of Him”—and then, I remember well, he added, with a tone which has fixed these words exactly upon my memory, “Oh, if I could adore Him and love Him and serve Him as some of these do, I should be a different person to what I am now! Then, while we hold fast our own opinion and be ready to die for it, we must acknowledge *this good* in those who differ from us—we must rejoice that Christ is received. We call this person by that name, and that person by this; but God does not regard the names we may give to this one or that, to this form or that, to this faction or that. He only notices the love, the adoration, the service we show to His dear Son.”

There was a nobility of disposition about him which ever forbade his meeting any opponent except upon the most open field of controversy or defense. He was too honorable, and his view of a clergyman's course of life was too high in principle, to admit of his countenancing any underground dealings with any one. Yet he was able to accommodate himself to, and deal in a winning way with, all the various tempers and habits of those to whom he ministered, whether in or out of his church. He was able to go into the most varying society of the world, coming out unscathed, and having always held his own. It was his rule never to limit himself to one class or party, but to act before all as one who ought to bear about with him, as a clergyman of the Church, a sort of universal character.

Such was the brave, true, honest, and simple mind which was so misunderstood—almost universally—during life, but which is now as universally acknowledged to be useful far beyond the Church of England.

F. ERNEST TOWER.

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#### LETTER E.

Many years ago I met F. W. Robertson, and lived in the same house with him for three weeks. I was very young, and his gracious manner and winning courtesy I shall not easily forget. The testimony of his oldest friends is true—he listened to the crude theories and dogmatic opinions of a young man with a sympathy which awoke thought, and a compassion which did not offend.

No cloud rests upon my memory of him.

I recall the first day I met him as vividly as if it were yesterday—the serene smile of welcome, the questioning look from his eyes, the frankly offered hand. We walked up a hill commanding a noble view of sea and mountain. His face lit up—he drank in with a deep breath the wide landscape. The contrast of the white foam dashing on the beach of blue slate pebbles—the racing of the scattering and fitful breezes upon the sea—the purple of the distant hills, were all marked by him with loving observation. He was happy in pointing out the delicacy of the clouds which an upper current was combing out upon the sky. He stooped to gather the wild daffodils which were tossing in the wind. Nothing was lost upon him. He touched all the points of the scene clearly enough to instruct his listeners how to see them, but with such poetic tact that he did not injure what I may call the sensibility of the nature. One thought more, that is, of the loveliness he spoke of than of the speaker. It was the unconscious art of genius.

I saw him again in a country-house. He rose early, and taught for two

hours before breakfast some of his young friends. One hour was given to instruction in the Bible. I have seen most suggestive notes on the Epistle to the Romans which were taken down during these morning conversations. The second hour was employed in teaching, sometimes Physical Geography, sometimes English Grammar, sometimes Chemistry. His subjects were mastered perfectly, and taught with happy illustrations and with a crystal lucidity of expression. After breakfast he generally went out shooting. Starting long before the rest of the party, he never relaxed his swift and eager walk till he arrived upon his ground. He went straight as an arrow, heeding no obstacles, and leaping easily ditches which the gamekeepers refused. He followed his birds till night fell, too impatient even to eat luncheon. He shot well, almost never missing his aim; and, with all his excitement, there was a business-like method in his work which showed, in spite of the way his eye flashed, that he could always command himself when success was in question. The breaking of the dogs interested him greatly, and he was angry when the gamekeeper lost his temper with them. He returned worn out, ate his dinner almost in silence, and remained scarcely a quarter of an hour over his wine.

After dinner we generally walked in the grounds till ten o'clock, and then adjourned to the school-room. By this time he had recovered all his energy and lightness. We played historical games, wrote poetry, capped verses. The freshness, eagerness, and anxiety which he displayed in these were delightful to us all. The humor with which he put down ignorance, the playfulness with which he exposed a mistake by willfully making another of the same kind twice as bad, the frown with which he pounced upon an offender whose metre was halting, the bright smile with which he welcomed a new thought or a happy expression, the social art with which he brought into relief and elucidated our different characters, made the hours fly, and have left to me pleasant memories.

He often walked with us while we rode through the woods, his active step keeping up easily with the rapid pace of the horses. He talked with delightful yet quiet enthusiasm. If a ray of sunlight came slanting through the trees on the grass—if a bough hung over the green path with remarkable beauty—if an orange fungus made a spot of bright color on the way, he was sure to remark them. It was wonderful how much he made us see. A rabbit-burrow, a hare racing in the distance, a bird singing in the wood, brought out anecdote after anecdote of the habits of animals. I shall not easily forget his delight when the woodcocks came and he was the first to see one, nor the way in which he absolutely ran over with stories of their manner of life. He seemed to me to know all the poetry which referred to animals, and quoted Wordsworth till I wondered at his memory.

He himself rode often. He made his horse his friend, talked to it, loved it, I think; and the horse knew this, and bore him with evident pleasure. His hand upon it was as delicate as a woman's, and he sat it like a knight. He seemed to become more than himself on horseback, and to throw off all the weight of life in the excitement of a gallop.

He dressed during the day in a dark-gray shooting suit, a black cravat, loosely tied, and a black wide-awake. His clothes seemed to belong to him. He was exceedingly nice in his dress, without vulgar precision. On Sunday he appeared dressed as a clergyman. I went to church with him with the rest. I remember his quiet words of remonstrance when one of the persons staying in the house said that "he should stay at home because the preacher was not worth hearing," and the gentle determination with which he gained his point. His manner in church was that of sacred and manly reverence, and no word of carping criticism followed on a very poor sermon.

I only heard him read out once, but I have not forgotten it. We had walked up to an old seat beneath an elm, and he suddenly seemed struck

with some suggestion from the view. He drew "In Memoriam" from his pocket, and read, "Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky." At first I did not like it, it seemed too solemnly toned; but the deep voice made its way, and I was so impressed with the consciousness that he felt a hundred meanings in the verses, which were concealed at that time from me, that I was awed and humbled. I never read the stanzas now without hearing his voice, without feeling what he meant when he closed the book, repeating twice over, with solemn hopefulness, "Ring in the Christ that is to be."

He rose when he had finished, and leaned over the wooden fence. Before him there lay in the still evening light a wide expanse of pasture-land dotted with weird thorns, and rolling up to a hill covered with firs. In the distance, sharply defined against a yellow sky, was a peculiar mountain-peak, dark purple. A faint blue mist was slowly rising and had filled the hollows. The wind was singing loudly through the withered bents of grass. He was silent for a few minutes, and then, as if to himself, began slowly to repeat Keble's hymn, "Where is thy favored haunt, Eternal Voice?" When he came to those lines:

No sounds of worldly toil ascending there,  
 Mar the full burst of prayer:  
 Lone Nature feels that she may safely breathe;  
 And round us and beneath  
 Are heard her sacred tones, the fitful sweep  
 Of winds across the steep,  
 Through withered bents—romantic note and clear,  
 Meet for a hermit's ear—

his voice seemed to take the tone of the wind, and I can not describe how well the landscape explained the verses, and the verses the landscape. It was a happy instance of his power of fitting thought to things. He did not spoil the impression by telling us that he meant the poetry to elucidate the scene. He was silent, only saying briefly, "*That* is my favorite hymn."

I left the house shortly afterwards, and never saw him again. I was told that at the harvest-home, which was held during his stay, he spoke with a charm and with a simplicity to the assembled laborers and tenants which touched rude hearts, and stirred the whole mass into enthusiasm.

He struck me as being the possessor of a great oratorical power. Whoever were his listeners, he had his hand upon their pulse the whole time that he was speaking. The prevalent feeling of the audience was felt by him. In sympathy thus with them, he could play upon their hearts as on an instrument. This was the impression which his conversation made upon me, and, from what I have heard, it was this which made him the master of his congregation, and the conqueror of the disaffected workmen in his second address to the Mechanics' Institute at Brighton.

He had a strange, unique character. I do not think he could, under any circumstances, have lived long, or ever have been serenely happy. Too much fire was put into every thing he said and did. Nothing ever seemed *common* to him. His senses appeared to me to be as preternaturally sensitive as his feelings. His pleasure and his pain were proportionally intense. To him the every-day joys of humanity were passionate delights; to him its every-day pains were keener than the life-sorrows of ordinary men. His very quietude was like the quietude of the sea, seemingly at rest, but traversed and stirred by a thousand currents. He wanted the rough bark which protects the tree against wounds, enables it to resist sharp winds and to reach old age. But the world should not complain, for it seems to me that it was this very want which made the beauty of his genius and the greatness of his life.

## LETTER F.

Brighton.

MY DEAR SIR,—I believe that you agree with me in the opinion that Mr. Robertson's *life*, in the deepest sense of the word, has already been given to the world in his sermons.

In complying with your request that I should furnish you with some personal reminiscences of Mr. Robertson, it is perhaps incumbent on me to state, though I have special reasons for cherishing his memory more than that of any other man whom I ever called a friend, that my acquaintance with him was rather intensive than extensive. It was only during the last year of his life that our intercourse deepened into friendship; nevertheless, that comparatively brief period, with its occasional meetings, sufficed to reveal to me what manner of man he was. I know that in private life, and especially in the society of younger minds, whose sympathies and aspirations were still unharmed by the leaven of worldliness, he would at times discourse with the same clearness, beauty, and indignation which characterized his utterance when he delivered his great defense of the *In Memoriam*; but, speaking for myself, it was not so much what he *said* as what he *was* that struck me. And, with reference especially to his moral character, I noted that in him truth and honor partook more of the quality of passionate attributes than of merely formal principles, and that a righteous indignation against meanness and hypocrisy burned in him like a consuming fire. There seemed nothing within the limits of the lawful and the right which he would not do, or dare, for those whom he honored with his friendship. In the presence of true sorrow, or of penitence, he was tender as a woman; but there was a sternness in his spirit which recalled that of the Hebrew prophets when, in private life, he had to confront those who, to his knowledge, had wronged or slandered another. In such a case it was bootless to talk to him of "extenuating circumstances." Evil had been done, and the evil-doer must be humiliated. He himself walked in such a sunlight of integrity, that any deviation in others from the path of righteousness inflicted on him actual pain; and not only so—he had such a vivid sense of the destructive and deadly power of sin, as seemed quite to have quenched in him the hope that, in certain cases, the restorative influences revealed in Christianity would ever be able to effect any healing. Would to God that all preachers believed, as Robertson did, that the wages of sin—now, and not hereafter only—is death! But the Gospel surely proclaims that good is mightier than evil; and as I recall Robertson's conversations, which indicated so rooted a despair with regard to the destiny of many for whom Christ died, my old impression is revived, that *that* despair had largely to do with the sorrow of heart which seems to flow as an under-current through all his sermons. I seemed to comprehend from his hopefulness of this kind the depth of St. Paul's words: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

To a mind thus sensitive to the sins and sorrows of our humanity, sadness could not be unfamiliar. His own lofty ideal necessarily entailed on him many griefs and disappointments. And indeed he sometimes thought that all true souls were unhappy. One day, as we were speaking together of the rich endowments of a youth in whom we were mutually interested, he said with emphasis: "How unhappy he will be!"

The impression which the grandeur of Robertson's moral and spiritual character has left within me has almost encroached, so to speak, on that of his intellectual power. But no one who ever even saw him, or listened to his earnest, eloquent talk—his tremulous, clear-ringing, musical voice imparting a richer sense to common words—could doubt for a moment that he was possessed of the rarest mental gifts. Still it was in the pulpit that the whole man came out, and there he was indeed as one inspired.

Robertson's sermons, even as we now possess them, are the "bloom and wonder" of modern pulpit eloquence. Exceptionally lucid in expression, they reveal such a combination of the analytic with the constructive and imaginative faculty; they are charged so abundantly with arrows of lightning, to flash home conviction on the "conscience as she sits within her lonely seat;" they indicate such intense prophetic earnestness; they contain such fearless denunciations of evil, in high places and in low; they manifest such a sympathy on the part of their author with the lonely, the hardworking, the suffering, and the poor; they display such a mastery of the latest European thought, so profound an acquaintance with both the letter and the spirit of the Scriptures, as of the innermost secrets of the life which is "hid in God"—its sorrows, its battling with doubts, its triumph through clinging to the cross of Christ; they disclose such a creative ability to turn truisms into living truths, or to convert the dry bones of orthodox assertions into vital influences for the daily life; they show such a grasp of great spiritual and historical principles, such a power to sever the essential from the accidental in the discussion of questions of Christian casuistry, such wisdom and liberality in the treatment of subjects like that of the Christian Sabbath—that Robertson must be pronounced, of all later Christian public speakers, *facile princeps*. He was at once philosopher, poet, priest, and prophet.

I fear that I can not put on paper the image of Robertson's personal appearance which lives in my heart; but the following pen-and-ink sketch may at least dimly represent the great preacher to those who never saw him.

In person he was rather above the average height, and his graceful and well-knit figure indicated the possession of much physical energy and activity. There was a remarkable *springiness*, if I may use the word, in his gait, and I can see him now bounding across the street to grasp the hand of a friend. His face was not striking from any peculiarity, but it was a beautiful one. The nose was straight and finely proportioned. The mouth showed great delicacy and purity of taste and feeling, and when the lips, with their rich sweeping curves, were closed, inflexible resolution. Compared with the upper part of the face, the chin seemed lacking somewhat in development; and the dark blue eyes, which left their light with you after he had gone, though set well apart, were smaller than the eyes of our greater poets generally are; but the noble forehead, so high, so full, so ideally rounded, and shaded by his rich brown hair, imparted, at a glance, the assurance that here was a man of great moral elevation of character and of large intellectual power.

In addition to what I have already said of my impression, as a whole, of Robertson's various mental and moral attributes, I would now single out for special mention the following characteristics.

And, first, I would speak of the manly simplicity which lighted up his whole life. His very appearance—his look, bearing, and even his dress—seemed to proclaim his quality. His language was always that of a thoroughly true and clear-seeing man. He spoke with a quiet, natural intonation. His conversation was that of a man who believed that truth and goodness commend themselves to the hearts which are ready to receive them, and that aught like *cant* springs from a root of unbelief. By the grace of God, Robertson's yea was yea, and his nay was nay.

Edward Irving, as you will remember, in an ordination charge, said to a young Scottish minister, "Be the clergyman always, less than the clergyman never." Robertson's words would rather have been, "Be the man always, the Christian man, and less than the man never." The priestly self-consciousness implied in Irving's counsel would have been intolerable to Robertson; and he believed that by simply being a man to his "brother-men" he could best by his living "show that glory of the Divine Son" which he "set forth" with such power in his "preaching."

From my connection with the Mechanics' Institution of this town, I had special and frequent opportunities for observing what Robertson had been to the working-men of Brighton—what he had done for them. He has built himself a living monument in their hearts, of which the Memorial Column in the Brighton Cemetery over his grave is but the outward and visible sign; and he has given an impulse to many of their lives, which I can not but believe will endure through all the future. And what was the secret of his influence? What brought the hard-working men of Brighton to Trinity Chapel, and at last gathered them by hundreds, amid ill-suppressed tears, to his grave? Doubtless his teaching was such as they had not heard in church before. Moreover, as he spoke to them from the platform, his fervid oratory, his practical wisdom, his sympathy with their doubts and struggles, his fearless exposition of their own special weaknesses, temptations, and sins, as well as of their rights and claims, called forth an unwonted response from their heart and conscience. But so far as I could learn from personal intercourse with the working-class, it was this manliness, this straightforwardness of which I am writing, that won their affections. They felt that he was not afraid of losing caste by associating with them. He sought to make them truer men, better workmen, worthier Englishmen; to awaken in them the full consciousness of that common high-calling to be sons of God, which we have received through our Lord and Elder Brother Jesus Christ.

This same manly simplicity characterizes all his sermons. And hence, while eloquent as no other modern sermons are, they have the sweetness and freshness of nature itself; they have nothing artificial about them. They seem to grow directly out of his life—a life that he lived in this God's world, responsive to all its grandeur, and rejoicing in its manifold beauty and harmony.

But, secondly, closely allied with this reigning simplicity was his love of clearness both in thought and expression. He never dealt in hints or innuendoes. The thing he did not see he never tried to say; but what he saw he said plainly and strongly. One is never at a loss to find out his meaning. He has no *arrière pensée*, no pet doctrine, suited for the few, but too precious to be thrown down amidst the multitude. What he had received he freely gave—believing that truth is not private property, but the heritage of the world.

Thirdly, Robertson was a master in logic. His moral integrity and his intellectual love of clearness led him to a severe self-discipline in logic. His sermons are “music in the bounds of law.” The materials of his discourses, to use another figure, were fused as in a furnace seven times heated, but they flowed out into quietly prepared forms. They are as true to the laws of thought as they are faithfully representative of Christian doctrine, feeling, and aspiration. “You do not know a subject thoroughly,” says Schiiller, “until you can play with it.” Few could play so gracefully and yet so logically with his subjects as Robertson could; and hence I am not surprised when I find that each of his sermons—even when we have but fragmentary notes of it—is a logical unity, just as in other respects it is a poetical one.

Fourthly, Robertson was eminently didactic. For popularity, as such, he had a scorn that some might call morbid. But he was ambitious, if I may use the term, to be regarded as a *teacher*. It is in this character that he is now and will be known to the Church and the world for years to come. Prophet I have called him; but he was more the teacher than the prophet.

He did not so much enlarge the horizon of our vision, as illuminate what already lay within the field of it. And in this respect, the power of his genius has, since his death, showed itself sublimely victorious over the clamor raised against the tendencies of his preaching. But during his life, those who had not endeavored to translate the familiar terms of Christian doctrine into

language more in harmony with the modes of thought and speech which God's Spirit teaches Englishmen in this century, missed the accustomed sounds, were startled by the use of common human words in the pulpit, and were alarmed by illustrations borrowed at will from the daily life and pursuits of the various classes who thronged his church—"from art, from nature, from the schools." Others, again, who had hitherto failed to apprehend that all ideas of truth, justice, and mercy among men are directly inspired (if they are not mocking shadows) by Him who is absolute truth, absolute justice, absolute mercy, shrunk from doctrinal statements which seemed to commend themselves rather too clearly to the apprehension of the intellect, and too much to the approval of the human heart and conscience. Then, those who leaned more to the dogmas of Unitarianism were ready to fancy that his representations of the Fatherhood of God and the perfect Humility of Christ, involved admissions incompatible with the honest acceptance of the creeds of the Church. But men on both sides confounded the flashes of genius with the aberrations of heresy.

As a teacher, he has done more than almost any of his contemporaries to remove the dust and rust from what I may call the currency of the Church. Nay, more; great truths which platitudes had done its best to degrade into immoral shibboleths, he relieved of their dross, and sent forth into the world as pure coinage, bearing the image and superscription of the Heavenly King. By way of illustration, I need only refer—and must indeed do no more than refer—to his teaching on Baptism, Absolution, the Atonement, and Imputed Righteousness.

Finally, Robertson was to his heart's core a loyal son of the Church of England. All her rites and ordinances were specially dear to him; and I know well, tolerant as he was, how his tastes and principles made him recoil from dissent, and with what freedom of conscience, with what thankfulness of heart, he found himself a minister of the National Church.

But I must bring this letter—I fear too long already—to a close.

In speaking as I have done, I am but giving expression to the love which is cherished by all his surviving friends. He had one mutual friend who will not read these lines, and by whom I stood at Robertson's grave on the day of his funeral—Lady Byron. She used to say that, from the first day of her acquaintance with Robertson, she "could not but painfully discover that he was sowing himself beyond his strength, and that his very calm was a hurricane." It was even so. But we must take great men as we find them; and I for one must here give God thanks for what Robertson was, and for all that He wrought through him. I am, dear sir, yours very truly, A. J. Ross.

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#### LETTER G.

MY DEAR SIR,—During Mr. Robertson's life at Brighton, I saw and spoke with him frequently; but of the many conversations which I had with him scarcely a trace remains, except the impression, deep and abiding, that he was the truest, purest, and most gifted man I have ever seen.

I never heard talk so luminous as his. When he spoke upon an obscure or difficult subject, it was as if a cloud had been lifted from a landscape, and all its details were seen shining in the full glory of clear sunshine.

To meet him in the street and to see his radiant smile of recognition, was to receive an upward influence. I know that, to many, a casual rencontre with him was a cherished hope in the morning and a delightful thought at night—that his presence was to such more than that of any other man—that his words were treasured by them as divinely-given oracles.

The congregation which he gathered round him was a remarkable one.

A large portion of it, in strong contrast to the other churches in Brighton, was composed of men. Some of the most thoughtful had been drawn thither from other congregations, and became habitual worshippers at Trinity Chapel; while others, who had never come to church before, found in his preaching the attraction of the Gospel of Christ to be both irresistible and life-long.

I have never heard the Liturgy read as Mr. Robertson read it. He carried its own spirit with him; and those prayers, so often degraded by careless reading into mere forms, were from his voice felt to be instinct with a divine light and spirit. The grave earnestness and well-weighed emphasis with which he read the Gospel of the day were absolutely an exposition of its meaning. A friend turned round and said to me once, "He need not preach a sermon now, that is sufficient."

I have seen no one so free from trick or affectation in manner, voice, or gesture. One of his anonymous critics wrote to him once, to complain of his wearing a ring while he was preaching. Though the ring was endeared to him as the last gift of a friend, he henceforward, from a Christian fear of offense, removed it always on entering the pulpit. He remained long in prayer during the hymn which preceded the sermon, and then stood up with eyes so closed that they seemed sunk into his head. On giving out his text he began with a voice tremulous at first, but which gathered strength forthwith, and had tones and power in it which enthralled our ears and stirred our hearts.

I can not describe to you in words the strange sensation, during his sermon, of union with him and communion with one another which filled us as he spoke. I used to feel as if every one in the congregation must be thrilling with *my* emotion, and that *his* suppressed excitement was partly due to his consciousness of *our* excitement. Nor can I describe to you the sense we had of a higher Presence with us as he spoke—the sacred awe which filled our hearts—the hushed stillness in which the smallest sound was startling—the calmed eagerness of men who listened as if waiting for a word of revelation to resolve the doubt or to heal the sorrow of a life—the unexpected light which came upon the faces of some when an expression struck home and made them feel—in a moment of high relief from pain or doubt—this man speaks to *me*, and his words are inspired by God. And when the close came, and silence almost awful fell upon the church, even after a sigh of relief from strained attention had ceased to come from all the congregation, I have often seen men so rapt that they could not move till the sound of the organ aroused them to the certainty that the preacher had ceased to speak. To such utterances a prayer of Alexander Knox seemed to be the only fitting close, "Deepen these impressions in me, O Lord!"

I have read over what I have written, and I say again that mere words can never reach to the true height of what this man was in the pulpit. I never understood till I knew him what Inspiration was; and whether in the church or in the street, he always seemed to speak as if under a higher than earthly influence. It is among the greatest blessings as well as responsibilities of my life that for nearly six years I heard and knew somewhat of Mr. Robertson.

His bearing was always gracious, courteous, patient; his conversation vivid, rapid, translucent, and marvellously gentle. One evening he came in and asked if I had gone to hear A. J. Scott lecture on Dante. I answered "No," and asked him how he had been satisfied. In reply, he gave me a swift analysis of the lecture, touching all the points, and omitting not a single thought of value. I heard afterwards from some of the audience that the lecture was uninteresting to them; but I can only say that, as it had passed through his mind, and as he rendered it to me, it was not only a won-



derful exhibition of his power of memory, but also bright with interest, and as luminous by its clear exposition of principles as it was by its admirable choice of illustrations.

Some little time afterwards I went to tell him that I was going to be married. I shall never forget the deep earnestness of his conversation with me on this occasion, nor the strange beauty of his words as he blessed me, and bade me God speed.

I wish I could recall one conversation which impressed me deeply. He had been visiting —, whose wife had just died, and we passed on to the subject of recognition and reunion after death. He startled us by saying that he saw no cause, either in Scripture or Reason, for believing that there was any universal law of recognition. Spiritual likenesses, he said, would draw together. The spiritual and intellectual affinities would, alone, determine the relationships of that state. "I shall know," he continued, "and converse there with men whom I have never seen, yet for whom my spirit has the profoundest reverence, while many with whom I may have been in constant communication on earth I shall never see in that other world."

My wife was pained by this; her thoughts, like mine, were then dwelling on the child who had first awoke the parental feeling in our hearts, and who had passed from us after the briefest stay. We had nothing but the heart's instinct to oppose to an argument which, from his lips, seemed to be irresistible in its cogency.

On another occasion he came with two other friends to a cottage I had in the country. We were to have a day upon the hills. He was in an odd, solitary humor, and full of quiet fun. Detaining me to ask some question about the flowers, he looked quaintly after the others who had preceded us by the road, and said, "Can we evade them; is there any back way to the Downs?" I told him he would have to leap a wall. "Oh, that is nothing!" He sprang lightly over the orchard wall, raced over the turf, and after a rapid walk, during which he seemed to drink the breeze, we reached a grove of beeches, and waited for our friends. We lunched, and for the only time I ever saw him so, he was merry, and full of wild paradox in his talk. Late in the summer evening he left with some flowers which he had charged his son to take great care of—"Mamma loves flowers, you know, Charlie."

Once again he came to that house to stay a few days. It was when his life was well-nigh spent. He had been forbidden to preach; he was suffering keenly from bodily pain, as well as from the worry and anxiety consequent on the Vicar's refusal to let him have Mr. Tower as his curate. He insisted on seeing all that was said in the papers on this subject; yet when I brought them to him, not one bitter word escaped his lips respecting a matter on which I do not pretend even now—twelve years after—to have mastered my own indignation.

He walked to church with us, for he was come to be sponsor for my boy, and in the evening asked that he might have tea upon the grass. I well remember that evening. We sat on the edge of the lawn in front of a great walnut-tree; all of us clustered round him till twilight deepened into night. We were almost silent listeners, while he talked on for hours unremittingly. It was almost the only time I ever heard one of his wonderful monologues, ranging over many subjects, bringing light into the dark recesses of each, and linking them all, diverse as they were, to one another with a power which could only have arisen out of the possession of great principles arranged in his own mind in harmonious connection with one another. I only remember that one topic was the taste for French light literature, on the evils of which he spoke with fiery energy. In that soft summer air we might have sat there the whole night—for he held us under his spell—had not the appearance of the wearied servant reminded us that it was twelve o'clock.

I never saw again this lightning of the intellect. It seemed to be the last effort of his expiring power.

The next morning he began to read family prayers, and broke down, asking me to finish. Then he sat under the trees, or in an easy-chair for hours, with eyes closed—sometimes dozing, more often suffering pain. On the Sunday he prepared to accompany us to church; it was Communion Sunday, and he said he should like much to go. As we walked together on the road, he suddenly stopped and said, "I can not go; I am in such extreme pain that I can not answer for myself." My wife wished that we should stay with him; but he would not permit it, saying he should be better by-and-by.

Now and then during his stay he would speak for a little while with the old interest; but chiefly he was silent, and we forbore talking except when he spoke. He said once that the sense of his being able to talk or be silent, to do exactly what he liked, was very consoling to him.

Before he left he spoke earnestly with my wife of a change I was then contemplating, approved it heartily, and in answer to an expression of sorrow that it must separate us from his public ministry, replied, "My work is done!" and once again he said to me, "If I have been able to do any true work for you, be very sure some one else will come to you to carry it on." On the way to Brighton he was roused up by seeing in a field some birds which he remarked he had never observed in Sussex before. I could not even see them, they were so far away, but his sight, keen even then, distinguished them so clearly as to mark their peculiarities.

Once afterwards I saw him for a few minutes at his own house. He was coming out of the door with me, when his little girl called to him from the top of the stairs—"Oh! papa, you are going out without kissing me!" "No, my darling, I will not," was his reply, as he stepped back, took her into his arms, and kissed her.

In less than two months that great heart had ceased to beat; and we who had loved him so deeply, yet felt sincerely that we had not honored and loved him as he deserved to have been. A sense of great irreparable loss fell upon us, and at first it seemed as if in the great shock of bereavement his flock were scattered to the winds, and that his work was naught.

But in common with many who shared with me the privilege of that wonderful ministry, I believe he is only now, so to speak, beginning to be appreciated, and his work to bear fruits.

What that work will be in its rich and glorious ultimates, that soul can best discern which can see farthest into the future of the Church, in virtue of a life of ceaseless prayer that Christ's kingdom may come, and His will be done on Earth as it is done in Heaven.

## APPENDIX II.

THE following notes of two lectures on Genesis are inserted here to show the manner in which Mr. Robertson prepared for his afternoon pulpit. They are too broken and unfinished for publication in any other shape, but they give a very fair idea of the close and affluent thought which he brought to bear on Old Testament subjects. The lecture on Abraham's temptation is a fine example of his mode of handling a dangerous and difficult subject.

These notes are dashed down partly in pencil, partly in ink, upon the backs of old letters folded in half. They have been evidently carried in his pocket,

and thoughts added here and there as he walked. They were not as they stand here taken into the pulpit. An abstract of them was made, in which merely the heads of the discourse were jotted down and a few of the leading thoughts; and even this, as I have already mentioned, was forgotten and dropped out of his hand when he had fairly got afloat upon the stream of his sermon.

## GENESIS XVIII.

A solemn passage, pregnant with subjects for thought. To these thoughts attention shall be directed; not to the frame-work of history in which they are inclosed. This frame-work is only the form.

Concerning that *form* I say nothing and decide nothing. It is easy to exercise ingenuity on the subject. But whether one of the mysterious Three remained as the representative of God, or whether then Abraham drew near to the invisible Jehovah, or whether this was an expostulation with one commissioned to represent the mind of God, I presume not to decide.

Let us confine ourselves to the kernel of the matter, instead of examining the shell which incloses it:

- I. The doom of the cities of the plain.
- II. Abraham's intercession.

## I. Doom, etc.

1. Destruction of Sodom, etc., predetermined.

God's modes of punishment are manifold—famine, pestilence, war, revolution.

But it does not follow that these are equivalent to destruction. Whether they be or not depends on the character of the nation. Defeat, even slavery, may only develop energies; it *destroyed* Jerusalem and Rome.

Revolution may be only the healthy overthrow of abuses, or the anarchy of a country thoroughly disordered. Never yet did a nation perish from without, but by a decay from within. The moral ruin preceded the violent outward one. Sarmatia never fell "unwept without a crime."

The destiny of a nation is decided by its morals. First, purity tainted; then—Compare the morals of these two nations. Under Abraham's tent were the incipient destinies of Israel; in the palaces of the cities, the decaying glory of a nation past its prime; not ripeness, but decay. One had a past, the other a future.

See Abraham standing in the door of his tent—simple, primitive, rising up at sight of strangers, the true gentleman, the true nobleman, not high-bred but well-bred. Charity, hospitality, the graces of the simple and the uncorrupted.

Then compare the population of these cities—feeble, enervated, cowardly—unable to resist a foreign foe—serving Chedorlaomer, buying off and deprecating his wrath by tribute, then restless under his yoke—cankered to the core with vice.

Do we not feel that in the one case there was vigorous young life—the blood of a thousand years yet to run in Israel's veins? In the other, a nation past its prime, ready to fall at the first blast. Was it not decreed that Sodom must fall? the question *how* she fell being a matter of indifference.

A solemn thought for England! Anxious considerations press upon us. It matters not what our ancestry have been; not our wealth nor our dazzling power will save us. Better to have a glorious future than to have had a glorious past.

Simple, austere virtues, these we want. Self-respect, domestic purity of the hearthstone; less love for light, corrupting foreign literature.

2. *Rectitude of Divine Justice*.—"God came down to see," etc. This is

the *form* of the truth. Remember it is but form. Revelation is poetry; make it prose, and it becomes insipid. It addresses the heart and the imagination, not the logical understanding. Say that this must be taken literally, and that because the Bible says "God *came down*," He did come down, and we are guilty of an absurdity.

Disengage the truth. There is no haste in Divine judgments. Deliberate, slow examination. This is not fury. Observe, however, for this reason, the inexorable character of justice—long-suffering; but when the hour has come, no voice can save.

We speak in soft ways of God—"love," and as if love and justice had to be reconciled. Whereas love is justice applied to different objects; just as the electric spark is different to different senses; to the ear a sound, to the tongue a sulphurous taste, to the eye a blinding flash. So God, speaking by one apostle of his character as a whole, says, "God is love;" by another, also as a whole, "God is a consuming fire."

Was not this *love*? Could love save Sodom? Would it have been love to let such a city go on seeding earth with iniquity? No! God is just; not to be bought off, coaxed off, reasoned off, prayed off. He is immutable.

3. *Prophetic anticipation by Abraham of this doom.* Form in which this anticipation appears—"Shall I hide from Abraham this thing which I do?" *Spirit*—It was not hidden from Abraham.

Now, what gave him this foresight? Of course, the Rationalist replies, political sagacity, experience, intellectual acumen. No such thing. "I know Abraham, that he will command his children," etc., verse 19.

Strong convictions of the sanctity of the moral *law*, Reverence for law. Justice, judgment—to do them, not to talk about them. Such was Abraham's character; and from such men few things are hidden. "If any man will do His will, he shall know, etc. Close connection between doing and knowing, between acting truly and seeing clearly.

Such men see into the life of things: something of the seer is in them; something prophetic. They live with God; doing God's will, they understand God's ways. Abraham looked at Sodom, and felt, *i.e.*, the voice within him said, "That city is doomed."

## II. Abraham's intercession.

### 1. His perplexity.

A suspicion of the Divine justice—"That be far from Thee, Lord, to slay the righteous with the wicked. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

The most horrible with which the mind of man can be tempted. Dreadful to doubt one's own salvation, and feel suspended over the gulf! But a more terrible gulf when we doubt whether all is right here. "Oh, to see the misery of this bleeding world!"

Consider for a moment the misconception of these words, "Shall not the Judge," etc. They have been used to prove the sovereignty of God. God is Judge, therefore what he does is right. He has a right, and therefore it is right. But Abraham does not say *that*. So far from acquiescing in the predestinarian feeling—it is to be, and therefore it is right; God is a Sovereign, and may do what He pleases—he is precisely doubting this, whether, though God be Judge, His deeds are right, taking the moral sense of Abraham as a test, and considering it horrible if God's acts do not agree with it.

It is a perilous way of speaking, "God has a right to decree what He will; my salvation, your damnation." It is not so the Bible speaks. It appeals to the sense of justice, "Are not My ways equal," etc. God never says, "I create a thing right, therefore I do it."

God's will does not make a thing right. It is God's character which determines His will.

For else, if the devil had created this world, wrong would be right, because his will; and we should have the terrible doctrine, Might makes Right.

2. Christian right to lay open our feelings respecting the great events of life in prayer.

A child may express his foolish wishes to his father. The father will not grant them. Yet is the privilege worth nothing?

Do not say, I must not go into that august Presence with a turbid, excited heart, with feelings all in disorder. You may and *must*. Abraham did, his heart tossed with wild suspicions of God. Suppose he had waited till he saw things in their right light before he prayed!

Christ in unrest—rare to Him—when his soul was troubled unto death, took these very means of calming it; left disciples, and all that was human, and turned to prayer.

3. False view of prayer as a talisman or a wishing-cap, by which we can have whatever we want; a charm by which we can bend the will of God to ours: whereas it is rather that whereby we get our hearts into harmony with God, see as He sees, and feel that His will is right.

A disappointing view, perhaps! a privilege destroyed. Yet think, my Christian brother—

4. Messianic intercession. “He ever liveth to make intercession for us.”

Do not materialize this text as if the prayer of Christ changed the will of God, as if God relented at His intercession. Christ is the mind of God expressing itself. Christ’s intercession is the human mind of God declaring itself in words. Do not think of Him as interceding with an unwilling father, and prevailing. Think that God has already resolved love; and that Christ is the *Word* by which the mighty heart of God finds utterance.

#### GENESIS XXII.

“The temptation of Abraham’s trial. “Tempted by God.” It was *the* trial of his life; and it is this—the trial, which fixes character.

1. It was *not the only trial*.

In truth, all his life had been trial. Outward prosperity—inward suffering. For many years, while his life was waning away, he had had no heir. Then came the parting with Lot, then the banishment of Hagar, and the final severance from Ishmael. Again, he had incurred the risk of losing Sarah and his own life twice. The danger of Lot, public calamities, famine—all added their sum to the account. Now this is the inner life of a life comparatively calm outwardly.

Life is temptation; yes, and temptation from God. Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

It is sad to think it so. Yet if it were otherwise! “Cloistered virtue!” Of what value is it? In some of these trials Abraham fell; in others he came off conquering.

He was by no means a perfect man; no specimen out of romance. His was a real life. What matter slips and failures, so that the heart be right at core?

Experience, profited by, that is the grand thing. Not that a man has been faultless, but that out of fault he has organized strength.

2. Trials do not become lighter as we go on. “*After these things?*” What! no repose? Is there no place of honorable quiet for the Emeritus? No. Harder and yet harder trials. For the Christian soldier there is no rest except in the grave.

Let a man conquer, and fresh trials will open, and fresh victories will ensue.

Nay, even *that* victory did not guarantee the future for Abraham.

Trials will assail us where we are most vulnerable. Everywhere. Head, and heart, and heel. We must dismiss, therefore, the thought that we can ever put off our armor.

- I. Difficulty.
- II. Nature of the trial.
- III. How sustained.

I. Difficulty.

God seemed to require what was wrong—to sanction human sacrifice.

1. Reply. God did *not* require it. You must take the history as a whole; the conclusion as well as the commencement. Had it ended in Abraham's accomplishing the sacrifice, I know not what could have been said. A dark and painful spot in Scripture. Plainly, the doctrine of God's sovereignty would have been inadequate as an explanation.

But "lay not thine hand on the lad." This is the final decree.

Here we must distinguish. Human sacrifices were forbidden.

God really required surrender of will, although He *seemed* to demand sacrifice of life. But further still—

It did not *seem* wrong to Abraham. It is not enough defense to say, God did not command wrong. Had God seemed to command wrong, the difficulty would be as great. Abraham's faith would have consisted then in doing wrong for the sake of God.

Now it did not. Abraham lived in a country where human sacrifices were common. He was familiar with the idea.

Just as familiarity with slavery makes it seem less horrible, so familiarity with this as an established and conscientious mode of worshipping God removed from Abraham much of the horror we should feel. Else Abraham did not show faith in obeying, but—

For, only consider. A voice orders him to transgress the first rule of conscience. Ought he not to reckon it a horrible temptation of the devil?

Could any miracle prove to *us* that such a sacrifice was right. Faith would have been shown in disobeying the voice, and saying, This voice within is God's—that is not.

This is of primary importance, that Abraham's moral conscience was not outraged by the command.

\* No conflict more horrible than when two duties clash; as, for example, Jephtha's vow. Herod's vow!

But it is more hideous still, if God's commandments, backed by miracles, command that which His voice within forbids. I can see no escape but insanity.

I dwell on this, because there is a possible delusion, when the idea presents itself, of sacrificing conscience as a duty.

Some argue thus: If it be noble to sacrifice life for God or man, how much more to sacrifice the soul; to tell a lie to save a life! or to speak falsely in order to establish a doctrine; to sacrifice virtue for the sake of one loved; to surrender political principle to save one's party. Such arguments are felt often by the weakly good. Observe: had Abraham outraged his conscience, it were not faith, but sin; and I say, reject such arguments as Satanic temptations. He who sacrifices his sense of right, his conscience for another, sacrifices the Godlike within him. He is not sacrificing self.

II. The nature of the trial.

1. *With circumstances of accumulated keenness; with aggravations.* "My Son—my only Son—whom I love—with whom all the future is connected—long waited for—the heir, full of promise and so dear, any thing else, not that."

God seems to take malignant pleasure in dwelling on the suffering he was about to cause.

Now the dread trial of this is to think "God requires that! His name love? Father? Nay, insatiate tyrant, this is the very tyranny of strength."

Forgive this blasphemy. I only put into words the rebellious feelings of many a heart here, if it had dared in its trial-hour to say out all. You who have so suffered can appreciate Abraham's manly resignation. To subdue the father in the heart—that a Roman has done; but to subdue it, and still say—not Fate, but Love requires this—that was the trial; and to do it without petulance, with a fierce steeling of the heart; in fine, to *trust* God.

2. *With his own hand.* Not by a delegate. Not as Moses' parents did in their obedience to the king's command, leaving matters to take their chance—hoping for some accident at last. Abraham was to preclude escape.

We do our sacrifices in a cowardly way; we leave loop-holes for escape.

We do not with our own hand at His call out asunder the dearest ties. We do not irrevocably take the path, but wait for some accident which may make it impossible. But when we are true to ourselves, conscience says with a terrible voice, No, with your own hand. The knife must be sharp, and the blow true. Your own heart must be the sacrifice, and your own hand the priest; it must not be a sacrifice made for you by circumstances.

### III. How met.

#### 1. Without ostentation.

He left the servants and went on alone. Had the sacrifice taken place, there was none to tell *how*; how the father's lips trembled while the Hebrew hand was firm. It had been done in secret, God alone seeing.

Here was no boast—no analysis of feeling—no self-consciousness. Men who make sacrifices do not talk of them. Here was no love of theatrical display, so common and so bad. Those are true sacrifices which have been done alone, and hidden. The world knows too much of what we feel and of what we lose.

#### 2. *In earnest.* Two particulars.

(1.) Abraham did not tell Sarah. The mother's heart would have pleaded, marred the sacrifice. Do we not know how men tell some weaker being—a mother or a wife—of the risk that is to be run, hoping that they will do that which it would be a shame for us to do—give notice or hinder it; or, perhaps, with entreaties and tears, excuse us to ourselves for not making the sacrifice.

Abraham did not tell Sarah, nor did he tell Isaac.

He was in earnest. He *meant* to take his son's life.

Consider when you plan a generous deed which is afterwards hindered. Did you *mean* to do it?

(2.) In not expecting Isaac back. Had Abraham expected what took place it had been no sacrifice.

Some persons make sacrifices, expecting to be repaid. They say and teach—"Do right, and you will not be the worse. Give up, and somehow or other God will make it up to you."

True, my brother. "No man hath left house and parents," etc., etc., "who shall not receive manifold more in this present world," etc.; but if you do it with that feeling, it is not religion, but traffic, barter. If you make sacrifices, expecting that God will return you your Isaac, that is a *sham* sacrifice, not a real one.

There is infinite gain in sacrifice. Yes, but not always in kind. Isaac is not always restored. You will be taken at your word. Do good, then, hoping for nothing in return.

#### *Application.*

1. The Christian sacrifice is the surrender of the will, the surrender of ourselves. When all the will has been submitted, then God says, "Now

I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

So the great sacrifice of Christ was pleasing, not because of the shedding of blood, but by reason of the surrender of will. It was not Isaac's blood which pleased, but Abraham's will. It was not Christ's blood that pleased, but—"Now I know."

2. Real love. "Whom thou lovest." Had Abraham not been willing to part with Isaac into the hand of God, his love even to Isaac would have been feeble.

I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honor more.

He who prefers his dearest friend to the call of duty, will soon show that he prefers himself to his dearest friend.

3. We need not seek for sacrifices. We need not be anxious to find a cross. There is in some a wild, romantic wish to find occasions.

Whereas plenty will occur every hour and moment, by God's appointment better than any devised by you.

God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering.

As a supplement to these notes of lectures, I add a letter written in answer to a request that he would permit a short-hand writer to take down his sermons. He has been often accused of rash and unconsidered statements in the pulpit. The following will plead his cause, and afford a better reply than I can give to an accusation which those who are extempore preachers themselves should be slow to make :

MY DEAR —, — Many thanks for your kind note, in which you ask me respecting my feelings on the subject of the short-hand reports of my sermons. I will try to reply in a few words.

I need scarcely say that it is gratifying—more than gratifying—to know that any of my congregation value my attempts sufficiently to think them worthy of preservation. I am most grateful for it, and for the kindly feeling towards myself of which I am not, perhaps, vain in saying that I accept it as the proof.

Some time ago you showed me some sermons taken down by a relation of your own, and were kind enough to ask if I disapproved of the continuance of this. Of course, I replied, no. I regretted that any expense should have been incurred, but the thing being private, I could no more object than I could to the practice which many members of the congregation have of taking down the discourses every Sunday, some in ordinary hand, some in short-hand. Mr. — put the case to me as one in which several kind friends united—and at great expense—to pay a regular reporter, and to preserve the sermons for their common, may I say, edification? and, I understood, my future use, if needed.

I saw one or two of these, and thought them, from a cursory glance, very accurate. But if you ask me to state candidly what I feel upon the subject, I should say that I think the plan very undesirable. I will not lay much stress on my *great* regret that so large an expense should be incurred for that which is not worth it—for tastes are unaccountable, and fortunes have been given for a tulip-root, streaked in a particular way, or with eight petals instead of seven—I should only say, I think you paid dear for your funnily-striped tulip. The Dutchman would say, I think not; it is my fancy.

But I will only say that there are a great many things said in extempore preaching which pass with the occasion; which are meant so to pass, which have not been deeply examined, and which will, therefore, not bear to be coldly scrutinized in manuscript. A printed or written sermon is always



scrutinized as if it claimed infallibility, and positive injury might be done to influence if such a hasty expression were stereotyped, as it were. I could not undertake to correct such sermons weekly; I am glad to forget all I say as soon as possible, and, consequently, I should not like to be answerable for such.

Add to this, that often one at least of the Sunday discourses is insufficiently prepared, the *expressions* utterly unstudied beforehand, the thing itself poor and jejune and worthless. I should not *like* to own it, though, as all but the general *impression* dies with the half-hour of its delivery, it may be well enough as a collection of hints and germs of thought. I think the knowledge, too, that what I said was being taken down in this way would hamper entirely the freeness of expression. As it is, I try to speak unshackled by any attempts to please, to form sentences, and to deprecate disapproval—I do not think I *could* be free were this done. For myself, I would far rather that all should perish except, as I said, the impression the moment after delivery. I preserve few records myself except on a few occasions—I can scarcely bear to read over any thing I have said. It would be a relief to me to know that no trace subsisted, except a few hints for my own use, and for future development of the thoughts touched upon.

I do earnestly trust that this may not seem discourteous. Of course I do not pretend to express strong disapproval if any one should still be determined to proceed. But in reply to your kind question, I have no hesitation in saying that it would give me real pain if the plan were adopted.

Believe me, most sincerely yours,

F. W. R.

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### APPENDIX III.

As a specimen of Mr. Robertson's teaching of his class of candidates for Confirmation, and of his explanation of the doctrines of the Church of England, the following may be interesting. The notes on the Commandments are too broken to be of use; and of those on the Sacraments, the few which remain have been so largely embodied in his sermons that they are here omitted. The same might be said of the questions and answers here given on Baptism, were it not that the subject is considered in a new light, and that the opinions form so radical a portion of his teaching, that, wherever he expresses them, I am inclined to insert them:

Q. What is Baptism?

A. The authoritative declaration of a fact.

Q. What fact?

A. That I am God's child.

Q. Why then do you say that I am so *made* in baptism?

A. Being *made*, I mean—*declared to be*.

Q. Explain what you mean.

A. As soon as a king dies his successor is king. Coronation *declares the fact*, but does not *make* him king. He was one before, but it corroborates, declares, affirms, seals the fact by a recognized form used for that purpose.

Q. Illustrate farther.

A. At mid-day, at sea, after the observation of the sun's altitude has been taken, the following form takes place: The commander asks what is the

hour? The reply is, 12 o'clock. He then rejoins, *make it so!* No act of his can literally determine mid-day; that is one of the facts of the universe, but that authoritative declaration in a most important sense does *make it 12 o'clock*—it makes it 12 o'clock *to them*; it regulates their hours, their views, the arrangement of their daily life, their whole course. So Baptism by authoritative revelation declares a fact, which it can not *make to be a fact*, but to all practical purposes makes it a fact to us; for, without such a declaration, it would be as if it were not. Again, in the ceremony of marriage—marriage is a spiritual fact; the mutual consent of two persons in holy wedlock. Based upon the precedent fact, the Church pronounces the marriage to be completed. *Forasmuch* as M. and N. have consented, etc., I pronounce, etc., etc. The Church does not pretend to *create* the union. She only notifies it in her own language; but observe how that notification, being authoritative in a very important sense, *makes it!* Suppose a ceremony, which was not authoritative, performed by a mock priest; or ratified only by the breaking of a coin between the parties. No one would venture to say that a *fact* had not taken place, recognized by the eyes of God: which the parties themselves could not without sin undo, yet, because destitute of authority, the marriage is invalid as a social contract. (In Scotland, however, its true validity is maintained.) Could we say that the giving of the ring was nothing? That the words of the priest are nothing? Are they not *every thing* to realize and give sanction to the union? So does baptism—pronouncing the fact in God's name to exist, *make that real on earth*, which in itself real before, was unreal to those to whom the ratification had not been shown.

Q. Tell me some of the prevailing opinions on this subject.

A. The Roman Catholics, and those who hold their views on this subject, believe that at baptism a magical change takes place in the infant; that he is changed from a child of wrath into a child of grace. For instance, as in the "Arabian Nights," on the pronunciation of certain words, human beings were changed by magicians into the forms of beasts and birds, etc.

Q. What is one of the evils of this, besides its falseness?

A. That on the commission of sin in after-life we are taught to believe that we are fallen from the grace of baptism, and that every step must be retraced in penitence and tears.

It puts a drag upon life and hope, quenches energy, and prevents the looking onward and upward.

Q. In what other way is this rite regarded?

A. Dissenters, Evangelicals, etc., hold that grace may, or may not, be given at baptism; it is a *perhaps*.

Q. What results from this?

A. Uncertainty—self-consciousness—education on a wrong basis. Uncertainty! The child does not know, whether *it is*, or whether it is not, God's child. Parents do not know whether to regard it as the child of God or of the devil. It is taught to look to *itself*, and not to God, for the attestation of the fact; hence come morbid feeling, egotism, self-retrospection, uncertainty. One day a child happens to feel well and cheerful; consequently the sun is bright to him, he has good thoughts, is happy in God. The next day the sky is overcast—he feels languid—he can not use the cant terms of the professions, else he would call himself "a castaway," a child of wrath.

Q. Does this view involve falsehood and contradiction?

A. Yes; we are taught that we become God's children by believing that we are his children!

Q. How can you believe a thing that is not true, until you believe it?

A. This is reasoning in a circle. I see no way out of the difficulty in which this view involves us.

Q. So, according to them, baptism may be *nothing*—*may be* a falsehood ?

A. Evidently; and I now understand the evils that must result in education from this false view.

Q. How should a child be brought up ?

A. It should be educated as God's child; not on a *perhaps*. You are "a child of God, a member of Christ, an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." It should be brought to enter into the full meaning of the glorious privileges it was put into possession of at its baptism.

Q. Why are god-parents necessary ?

A. In the baptism of an adult two things are necessary—1st. He must be accepted by God. 2d. He must declare his belief in that; but, in the case of an infant, only one thing is necessary—God's acceptance of him.

Q. Are sponsors *absolutely* necessary ?

A. No; but most desirable. Take, for instance, a club, or a society. A man wishes to enter; he can not do so until he is proposed and seconded by two of the members, who answer for him that he is fit to become a member. In the same way it is necessary, for the sake of order, that the Church should require a guaranty, to guard itself against the introduction of improper persons; it is an ecclesiastical institution to keep it from confusion. In adult baptism the person is required to declare his faith; but as the *infant* can not express faith, repentance, love, charity (having as yet none of these feelings), in infant baptism sponsors are appointed to speak for them, and at Confirmation the children take these vows upon themselves.

Q. Why are we bound by their promise ?

A. Because those obligations were on us from our *birth*. If they had promised I should be brought up as a nun, or a sailor, or bound to any particular trade, of course such promises would not be obligatory upon me; but my god-parents only *declare* that to which I am bound by an eternal obligation; they impose on me no *new* obligation.

Q. If they had not promised, would you not be bound to keep God's commandments ?

A. Of course; though not done for him by the child's consent, sponsors make promise of what, by eternal laws, he is *bound* to do hereafter.

Q. Is this essential to the validity of baptism ?

A. Not *essential*, but *desirable*, as I have shown before.

Q. Why is it desirable ?

A. As an ecclesiastical act.

Q. What is the earthly use of baptism ?

A. To mark Christians from those who are not Christians. Without *god-parents*, the Church would have no guaranty that its members would be brought up as Christians; just in the same manner, those men in a club who propose a new member promise that he shall not disgrace a society. The promise in either case is made *implicitly*, if not *explicitly*.

Q. Suppose, if hereafter the child turns out badly, how far are the sponsors guilty ?

A. If they had every reason to believe that his parents would bring him up well, they need scarcely inquire further; but if they did not know enough of them, and if the parents were careless, then the sponsors are to blame. Sponsorship was evidently instituted to serve very different purposes from what it does at present; the titled and rich are chosen, instead of Christian people, who would do their duty.

Q. What does the Church show ?

A. The Church is a society of people existing on earth, to destroy evil, and keep its members in God's ways. This great society is continually replenished by fresh members—an ecclesiastical necessity essential for the existence of a church.

Q. What is a state of salvation?

A. Saved already! you *are* God's child. Born so naturally, you may be ignorant of great principles, you may live below them, and refuse to avail yourself of that which is yours. This is a revelation from God that you are such. The inheritance is yours! If you will not claim it, you may forfeit your rights, you may live as children of the world, of the flesh, and of the devil.

Q. What is to be said to such an one, who is living forgetful that he is "God's child?"

A. You are baptized. St. Paul looked on all such as Christians. Heb. iii. 14, "We are made partakers." 2 Cor. xiii. 5, "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, if ye be not reprobates?" "Know ye not that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost?"

Q. What is the meaning here of the word reprobate?

A. Castaway.

Q. What does this great and beautiful doctrine of God prevent our doing with regard to others? What distinction does it forbid us to make?

A. It forbids us to say *we* are God's children, and *you* are of the world. No! erring, ignorant, if you will, but God's child, nevertheless, and our brother, though living below his privileges. 2dly. It destroys the possibility of vanity and exclusiveness; there is an end of all spiritual pride, for there is no merit of our own.

Q. How is this truth taught by Christ?

A. The beginning of His prayer represents it—"Our Father." The universal Father. This simple, small word contains the essence of Christian faith.

Q. We talk of resisting "the world, the flesh, and the devil;" what do we mean by the *flesh*?

A. The flesh means all the desires that come through the channel of the senses, such as gluttony, idleness, love of ease, etc. In a desert island, we should be subject to the desires of the flesh.

Q. Are we to destroy, crush, crucify those desires?

A. Not to destroy, to ennoble them.

Q. When we say "we are fallen," what do we mean?

A. We mean that our will is disordered, that it does not take its proper place. There is within us a *mob* (as Plato has described it), a host, a crowd of smaller passions all striving for the mastery. Take, for instance, a watch with the regulator broken; all the wheels must go in disorder.

Q. Why is this view of our nature an important one?

A. Because if we look upon the desires as to be *extirpated*, we shall go out of the world with monks and hermits. This produces asceticism. Monks and hermits taught that the powers of the body were to be destroyed in order to insure the destruction of the lusts; or, rather, the way in which they set about it effected the ruin of the physical energies—such as starvation, loss of sleep, constant flagellation, etc. There is no *goodness* in the extirpation of feeling.

Q. When are the baser parts of our nature ennobled?

A. When they are under the rule and guidance of our higher nature—"This I say, then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Let Christ rule in you, and then these "baser parts" will be sanctified. Take, for instance, woman and her sphere. She ministers to the grosser wants of our nature, preparing food, keeping the house clean, and many such offices, which, if they were done to gratify mere brutal appetites, would be mean and low, but if done in *love*, the services are transformed by the higher spirit into something *divine*. The cup of cold water given in Christ's name, is the spirit of love and tenderness and pity. Think of all these minor services as ruled and directed by love, by self-denial. Beasts, when ruled by the

higher mind of man, become noble; they remain bestial if not ruled. We are commanded, "Glorify God in your body." This was a root-thought of St. Paul's; you will find it almost everywhere in his writings; he has seized that great idea, "Let the baser and the meaner feelings be ennobled by the higher." Let us understand this thoroughly, otherwise we shall take false views of human nature. Eating and drinking are not wrong. "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." The lusts of the flesh are not to be crushed, otherwise we shall form wrong conceptions of our nature.

Q. What is the *world* as distinguished from the flesh?

A.\*

Q. What are the dangers of the world?

A. Its spirit, tone, and temper working on us to do that which is *contrary* to the spirit of Christ.

Q. Are the world's maxims always the same?

A. In the days of chivalry, the world had a peculiar code of honor, and they made offenses against that code all in all. Pride was thought nothing of—not reckoned as sin; but if a man was a coward he was disgraced.

Q. How in this instance would the Christian and the man of the world be at issue?

A. If a man, for the sake of conscience, refused to fight, he would be condemned by the *world*, and pointed at.

Q. In our day, what is the worldly spirit, *par excellence*?

A. The love of money, the wish to get on in the world; the result of this is, in trade, false maxims, worldly ways of advancing, which are opposed to the Christian spirit of justice and fair-dealing.

Q. Again, what is the spirit of the world in the London season?

A. The love of pleasure—frivolity—money—love of waste of time, etc. Whatever is opposed to the spirit of Christ is the spirit of the world. To render homage to rank and wealth, when in connection with what is false and unworthy and mean. Making these worldly distinctions the chief ends of our being, instead of renouncing the world, when it is opposed to the spirit of Christ.

Q. We have now seen what the lusts of the flesh and the world are; what is it to renounce the *devil*?

A. *His* works are the sins of our higher nature, spiritual offenses—such as envy, pride, anger, malice. The *solitary* sins are those of the *flesh* and of the *devil*. The world's spirit does not recommend envy, or intemperance, or sloth. All the sins which attack our higher nature, which might come to us as *spirits*, if we had no bodies at all, and which assail us as *solitary* spirits, are sins of the *devil*.

Q. Distinguish them from sins of the flesh and of the world.

A. To rebel against God; to bow down to wrong. They appeal to our pride, to our ambition. Our Saviour's answer was—"Get thee behind me, Satan!" In the estimation of the world these are not condemned. Pride is admired. We are most ashamed of confessing our meaner sensual sins—gluttony, etc., etc., the slavery to our lower passions. When we yield to them, we sink to a level with the brute; but when we yield to the sins of our *higher* nature, we are then on our way to become *devils*—vitiating that which should lead to the highest in us.

Q. Let us consider now "all the articles of our Christian faith." How many creeds are there in the Church of England?

A. Three—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the St. Athanasian.

Q. Why is a correct faith necessary to salvation?

A. Because what we believe becomes our character, forms part of us, and

\* No answer—but see Sermon XIII. (Second Series).

character is salvation or damnation; what we *are*, that is our *heaven* or our *hell*. Every sin bears its own punishment.

Q. If I doubt the doctrine of immortality, for instance, what effect will that have on my character?

A. It will narrow all our infinite desires to a span, and, almost inevitably, the passion or the temptation of the moment will conquer. It is true it did not affect the *Stoics* thus, for they held that right was better than wrong, and the sacrifice of evil inclinations was nobler than the indulgence of them, though they did not believe in the immortality of the soul. The noblest creed ever made out by human beings was that of the *Stoics*.

Q. From our creed, what sort of a religion is Christianity?

A. An historical religion; it deals with facts, not feelings; it *stands* upon facts. These things *have* been. Jesus *did* live. He suffered, died, rose again!

Q. What do you learn from your belief?

A. Etc., etc., etc.

Q. What notion is here attached to the name of God?

A. That He is "*our Father*." Homer calls Jupiter the *father* of gods and men—he meant merely creator.

Q. What do we imply in the word *Father*?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What is there between the father and the child?

A. A likeness between them.

Q. In what respect? Not in form?

A. No; in character. Our *spiritual* relationship to God is a relation of likeness. Anger, love, etc., are not *different* in Him and in us. They are the same in kind in Him as in us, but in Him they are pure. These are words not perfectly correct, but they express the affinity between us and God—that He feels *like us* and *with us*. If He be only a cold abstraction, there can be no love, devotion, trust.

Q. What more is implied besides community of likeness?

A. That His love extends to *all*.

Q. Are any shut out?

A. Not any.

Q. Whom did *Christ* select as a brother?

A. A Samaritan, a heretic, an alien, a foreigner.

Q. What startled the Jews most in the teaching of Jesus?

A. His proving to them, by their own Scriptures, that the God of their fathers was not the God of the *Jews* only. Instances brought forward: Elijah was sent to the widow of Sarepta, she being a Gentile; Elisha to Naaman the Syrian. All were put on an equality with the Jews. Christ says, "In long-past times, your own history teaches you what I have come to proclaim, that *they* are God's children." The parental character so manifested to the Jews was hateful to them. We, too, are as far as ever from the reception of that great truth. We too often treat servants, the poor, people of a different creed, as if they were not of the same flesh and blood, had not the same *Father*. Realize that *thoroughly*—God our *Father*! "I believe in God the Father!"

I have said previously that Robertson's care of his Confirmation candidates was an individual care. The following letter, brief and ephemeral as it is, will yet show how that watchfulness was supported to the last, and with what wise thoughtfulness he endeavored to seize the moment of quietude in a girl's existence, that he might make it a moment of heavenly quietude, and a starting-place from whence a devoted life of sacred peace in Christ might spring:

MY DEAR —,—I wish to write one line which will reach you the day before the Confirmation, partly to remind you that I shall be with you all, generally and individually, on the 27th, at the appointed hour, and partly to advise you to be as much alone as possible the evening before. It is a valuable opportunity for pausing in the career of life, for taking breath, as it were, before you begin again, reviewing the past and considering the future. A few years ago and you were not: a few more, and on this stage of life you will be no more. Much has been done, much is yet to be done in the interval. You are now at the outset of womanhood. Woman's duties, woman's strange and mixed destiny of suffering, feeling, and deep life is beginning. I pray that it may end as wisely and beautifully as it is now, I trust, beginning purely and gently. May God give you earnestness when you breathe your promise on Tuesday next! May He strengthen you to keep it through all life with unflinching fidelity! May He bless you now, my dear young friend, and always!

END OF "LIFE AND LETTERS."





EXPOSITORY LECTURES  
ON  
ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES  
TO THE  
CORINTHIANS:

*DELIVERED AT BRIGHTON*

BY THE LATE

REV. FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON,

THE INCUMBENT OF TRINITY CHAPEL.

ALPHABETICAL LIST

OF

THE NAMES OF THE

MEMBERS OF THE

ASSOCIATION

FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE

TO  
*THE CONGREGATION*  
WORSHIPPING IN  
TRINITY CHAPEL, BRIGHTON,  
FROM AUGUST 15, 1847, TO AUGUST 15, 1853,  
THESE  
EXPOSITORY LECTURES  
DELIVERED BY THEIR LATE PASTOR  
ARE DEDICATED.



## PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

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A FEW months after Mr. Robertson had entered on his ministry at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, he announced his intention of taking one of the Books of Scripture as the subject of Expository Lectures for the Sunday afternoons. This form of address, he said, gave him greater freedom, both in subject and style, than that of the sermon, with its critical or historical division of some text arbitrarily taken as a prefix. He intended, therefore, to devote each Sunday morning to the sermon; and in the afternoon to go regularly through each chapter of the Book selected, including in his exposition all the topics contained therein.

On this plan he commenced with the First Book of Samuel. In the exposition of this Book, many subjects came under review which would not have found a place in an ordinary sermon. He was expounding Hebrew national life, and, incidentally, the experiences of particular individuals of that nation—in all of which he discerned lessons for the English nation, and for the men and women who sat before him. Thus it occurred that topics of national policy, so far as bearing on individuals—questions of social life—of morals, as they are connected with every-day life, arose naturally, and were treated with unshrinking faithfulness. The period (1848) was of great political and social excitement, and these Lectures may emphatically be said to have been “preaching to the times.”

Some people were startled at the introduction of what they called “secular subjects” into the pulpit; but the lecturer, in all his ministrations, refused to recognize the distinction so drawn. He said that the whole life of a Christian was sacred; that common every-day duties, whether of a trade or a profession, or the minuter details of a woman’s household life, were the arenas in which trial and temptation arose; and that, therefore, it became the Christian minister’s duty to enter into this familiar working life with his people, and help them to understand its meaning, its trials, and its compensations.

It were perhaps out of place here to say how greatly the congregation valued this mode of teaching, although it may be properly observed that it was at this period that his marvellous influence with the working-classes commenced.

Subsequently Mr. Robertson selected the Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Genesis for his afternoon expositions; after which he commenced those Lectures on the Epistles to the Corinthians, of which this volume is but a very imperfect transcript. The Epistles to the Corinthians were selected by him, because they afforded the

largest scope for the consideration of a great variety of questions in Christian casuistry, which he thought it important to be rightly understood. It will be seen that these Lectures were generally expository of the whole range of Christian principles. They are less a scheme of doctrine than Mr. Robertson's view of St. Paul's ideas on all the subjects included in his Epistles to the Church at Corinth.

They were the fruit of much study and preparation, and from examination of his papers it appears that Mr. Robertson prepared very full notes of all the leading divisions in most of these Lectures, while of the minor divisions a single word was often all that was written down to guide his thought. Occasionally, at the request of some friends, he wrote his lecture out after its delivery; and these, with short-hand notes of others, taken by different people, and which have been carefully collated with his own manuscript notes, have been the materials from which this volume has been arranged. It is, therefore, necessarily somewhat fragmentary in its character. Mr. Robertson's custom was to preach from forty to fifty minutes, with a clear, unbroken delivery, in which there was no hesitation or tautology. Hence it will be evident, from the quantity of matter contained in each of these printed Lectures, that a considerable portion of the spoken Lecture has not been given; and this will explain the brevity of some of the discourses, and the apparent incompleteness with which many of the topics are treated.

A few sermons on different texts in the Epistles to the Corinthians have already appeared in the different volumes of Mr. Robertson's Sermons; but it has been considered best to include them in this volume (although they did not form part of the series), in order that the Lecturer's view of the Epistles might so be rendered more complete.

Mr. Robertson had preached in the morning on the Parable of the Barren Fig-tree with an earnestness and solemnity which now seem to have been prophetic. In the afternoon he concluded, in the same spirit, this Series of Lectures with the text: "Finally, brethren, farewell" (2 Cor. xiii. 11); and his voice was never afterwards heard from the pulpit of Trinity Chapel.

*November 15, 1859.*

# CONTENTS.

LECTURE AND TEXT.	DATE.	PAGE
1.* Acts xviii. 1 .....	June 1, 1851.....	409
2. 1 Cor. i. 1-3.....	" 8, " .....	419
3. " i. 4-13.....	" 29, " .....	424
4. " i. 14-22.....	July 6, " .....	429
5. " i. 23, 24.....	" 20, " .....	432
6. " ii. 1-7.....		434
7. " iii. 1-10.....	Nov. 2, 1851.....	436
8. " iii. 11-23.....	" 9, " .....	441
9. " iv. 1-6.....	" 16, " .....	447
10. " iv. 7-21.....	" 23, " .....	452
11.† 2 Cor. ii. 10, 11.....	" 23, " .....	458
12. 1 Cor. v. 1-13.....	" 30, " .....	465
13. " vi. 1-11.....	Dec. 7, " .....	471
14. " vi. 12-20.....	" 21, " .....	477
15. " vii. 10-24.....	Jan. 4, 1852.....	482
16. " vii. 29-31.....	" 11, " .....	490
17. " viii. 1-7.....	" 18, " .....	499
18. " viii. 8-13.....	" 25, " .....	504
19. " ix.....	Feb. 8, " .....	514
20. " x.....	" 22, " .....	519
21. " xi. 1-17.....	Mar. 21, " .....	524
22. " xi. 18-34.....	" 23, " .....	528
23. " xii. 1-3.....	Apr. 4, " .....	530
24. " xii. 31; xiii. 1-3.....	" 13, " .....	533
25. " xiii. 4-13.....	" 25, " .....	536
26. " xiv. 1-24.....	May* 2, " .....	542
27. " xiv. 25-40.....	" 9, " .....	549
28. " xv. 1-12.....	May 30, 1852.....	555
29.† " xv. 13-20.....	Apr. 20, 1851.....	564
30. " xv. 21-34.....	June 6, 1852.....	570
31. " xv. 35-45.....	" 13, " .....	576
32.† " xv. 46-58.....	Jan. 18, " .....	581
33. " xvi. 1-9.....	June 20, " .....	587
34. " xvi. 10-24.....	" 27, " .....	593
35. 2 Cor. i. 1-14.....	July 11, " .....	599
36. " i. 15-22.....	" 18, " .....	604
37. " i. 23, 24; ii. 1-5.....	" 25, " .....	607
38. " ii. 6-11.....	Aug. 1, " .....	611
39. " ii. 12-17; iii. 1-3.....	" 8, " .....	616
40. " iii. 4-18.....		621
41. " iv. 1-15.....	Nov. 14, 1852.....	626

\* Introductory.

† Morning Sermons.

LECTURE AND TEXT.	DATE.	PAGE
42. 2 Cor. iv. 16-18.; v. 1-3.....	Nov. 21, 1852.....	631
43. " v. 4-11.....	" 28, ".....	635
44. " v. 12-17.....	Dec. 5, ".....	640
45.* " v. 14, 15.....		645
46. " v. 18-21.....	Dec. 12, 1852.....	654
47. " vi. 1-10.....	" 19, ".....	658
48. " vi. 11-18.....	" 26, ".....	662
49. " vii. 1.....	Jan. 2, 1853.....	667
50. " vii. 2-8.....	" 16, ".....	671
51.* " vii. 9, 10.....		676
52. " vii. 11-16.....	Jan. 30, 1853.....	681
53. " viii. 1-12.....	Feb. 20, ".....	687
54. " viii. 13-15.....	" 27, ".....	693
55. " viii. 16-24; ix. 1-15.....	Mar. 6, ".....	697
56. " x. 1-18.....	" 20, ".....	704
57. " xi. 1-33.....	Apr. 3, ".....	709
58. " xii. 1-4.....	May 8, ".....	716
59. " xii. 6-11.....	" 15, ".....	723
60. " xii. 8, 9, 10.....	" 29, ".....	729

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\* Morning Sermons.



LECTURES  
ON THE  
EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

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INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

ACTS xviii. 1. *June 1, 1851.*

It has been customary with us for more than three years to devote our Sunday afternoons to the exposition throughout of some one Book of Scripture, and our plan has been to take alternately a Book of the Old and of the New Testament. I have selected for our present exposition the Epistles to the Corinthians, and this for several reasons—amongst others, for variety, our previous work having been entirely historical.\* These Epistles are in a different tone altogether: they are eminently practical, rich in Christian casuistry. They contain the answers of an inspired apostle to many questions which arise in Christian life.

There is, too, another reason for this selection. The state of the Corinthian Church resembles, in a remarkable degree, the state of the Church of this town in the present day. There is the same complicated civilization; the religious quarrels and differences of sect are alike; the same questions agitate society; and the same distinctions of class exist now as then. For the heart of Humanity is the same in all times. The principles, therefore, which St. Paul applied to the Corinthian questions will apply to those of this time. The Epistles to the Corinthians are a witness that religion does not confine itself to the inward being of man alone, nor solely to the examination of orthodox opinions. No! Religion is life, and right instruction in religion is not the investigation of obsolete and curious doctrines, but the application of spiritual principles to those questions, and modes of action,

\* The Book of Genesis.

which concern present existence, in the Market, the Shop, the Study, and the Street.

Before we can understand these Epistles, it is plain that we must know to whom, and under what circumstances, they were written, how the writer himself was circumstanced, and how he had been prepared for such a work by previous discipline. We make, therefore,

I. Preliminary inquiries respecting Corinth, viewed historically, socially, and morally.

II. Respecting the Apostle Paul.

I. Inquiry respecting Corinth.

We all know that Corinth was a Greek city, but we must not confound the town to which St. Paul wrote with that ancient Corinth which is so celebrated, and with which we are so familiar in Grecian history. That Corinth had been destroyed nearly two centuries before the time of these Epistles, by the Consul Mummius, B.C. 146. This new city, in which the apostle labored, had been built upon the ruins of the old by Julius Cæsar, not half a century before the Christian Church was formed there. And this rebuilding had taken place under very different circumstances—so different as to constitute a new population.

Greece, in the time of the Roman dictators, had lost her vigor. She had become worn out, corrupt, and depopulated. There were not men enough to supply her armies. It was necessary, therefore, if Corinth were to rise again, to people it with fresh inhabitants, and to reinvigorate her constitution with new blood. This was done from Rome. Julius Cæsar sent to his re-erected city freedmen of Rome, who themselves, or their parents, had been slaves. From this importation there arose at once one peculiar characteristic of the new population. It was Roman, not Greek; it was not aristocratic, but democratic; and it held within it all the vices as well as all the advantages of a democracy.

Observe the peculiar bearing of this fact on the Epistles to the Corinthians. It was only in such a city as Corinth that those public meetings could have taken place, in which each one exercised his gifts without order; it was only in such a city that the turbulence and the interruptions and the brawls which we read of, and which were so eminently characteristic of a democratic society, could have existed.

It was only in such a community that the *parties* could have been formed which marked the Christian Church there; where private judgment, independence, and general equality existed, out of which parties had to struggle, by dint of force

and vehemence, if they were to have any prominence at all. Thus there were in Corinth the advantages of a democracy; such, for instance, as unshackled thought; but also its vices, when men sprang up crying, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos."

Again, the population was not only democratic, but commercial. This was necessitated by the site of Corinth. The neck of land which connects northern and southern Greece had two ports, Cenchræa on the east, and Lechæum on the west, and Corinth lay between either seaboard. Thus all merchandise from north to south necessarily passed there, and all commerce from east to west flowed through it also, for the other way round the Capes Malea and Tænarum (Matapan) was both longer and more dangerous for heavily-laden ships. Hence it was not by an imperial fiat, but by natural circumstances, that Corinth became the emporium of trade. Once rebuilt, the tide of commerce, which had been forced in another direction, surged naturally back again, and streamed, as of old, across the bridge between Europe and Asia.

From this circumstance arose another feature of its society. Its aristocracy was one not of birth, but of wealth. They were merchants, not manufacturers. They had not the calm dignity of ancient lineage, nor the intellectual culture of a manufacturing population. For let us remember that manufactures *must* educate. A manufacturer may not be a man of learning, but an educated man he must be, by the very necessity of his position. His intelligence, contrivance, invention, and skill, which are being drawn out continually every hour, spread their influence through his work among the very lowest of his artisans. But, on the other hand, Trade does not necessarily need more than a clear head, a knowledge of accounts, and a certain clever sagacity. It becomes, too, a life of routine at last, which neither, necessarily, teaches one moral truth, nor, necessarily, enlarges the mind. The *danger* of a mere trading existence is, that it leaves the soul engaged not in producing, but in removing productions from one place to another; it buries the heart in the task of money-getting; and, measuring the worthiness of manhood and of all things by what they severally are *worth*, too often worships mammon instead of God. Such men were the rich merchants of Corinth.

In addition to this adoration of gold, there were also all the demoralizing influences of a trading seaport. Men from all quarters of the globe met in the streets of Corinth, and on the quays of its two harbors. Now, one reason why a population is always demoralized by an influx of strangers, con-

tinually going and coming, is this: a nation shut up in itself may be very narrow, and have its own vices, but it will also have its own growth of native virtues; but when peoples mix, and men see the sanctities of their childhood dispensed with, and other sanctities, which they despise, substituted; when they see the principles of their own country ignored, and all that they have held venerable made profane and common, the natural consequence is that they begin to look upon the manners, religion, and sanctities of their own birthplace as prejudices. They do not get instead those reverences which belong to other countries. They lose their own holy ties and sanctions, and they obtain nothing in their place. And so men, when they mix together, corrupt each other; each contributes his own vices and his irreverence of the other's good, to destroy every standard of goodness, and each in the contact loses his own excellences. Exactly as our young English men and women, on their return from foreign countries, learn to sneer at the rigidity of English purity, yet never learn instead even that urbanity and hospitality which foreigners have as a kind of equivalent for the laxity of their morals. Retaining our own haughtiness, and rudeness, and misanthropy, we graft upon our natural vices sins which are against the very grain of our own nature and temperament.

Such as I have described it was the moral state of Corinth. The city was the hot-bed of the world's evil, in which every noxious plant, indigenous or transplanted, rapidly grew and flourished; where luxury and sensuality throve rankly, stimulated by the gambling spirit of commercial life, till Corinth now in the Apostle's time, as in previous centuries, became a proverbial name for moral corruption.

Another element in the city was the Greek population. To understand the nature of this we must make a distinction. I have already said that Greece was tainted to the core. Her ancient patriotism was gone. Her valor was no more. Her statesmen were no longer pure in policy as in eloquence. Her poets had died with her disgrace. She had but the remembrance of what had been. Foreign conquest had broken her spirit. Despair had settled on her energies. Loss of liberty had ended in loss of manhood. Her children felt the Roman Colossus bestriding their once beloved country. The last and most indispensable element of goodness had perished, for hope was dead. They buried themselves in stagnancy. But remark, that amid this universal degeneracy there were two classes. There were, first, the uncultivated and the poor, to whom the ancient glories of their land were yet dear, to whom the old religion was not mere-

ly hereditary, but true and living still; whose imagination still saw the solemn conclave of their ancient deities on Mount Olympus, and still heard Pan, and the Fauns, and the wood gods piping in the groves. Such were they who in Lystra came forth to meet Paul and Barnabas, and believed them to be Jupiter and Mercury. With such, paganism was still tenaciously believed, just as in England now the faith in witchcraft, spells, and the magical virtue of baptismal water, banished from the towns, survives and lingers among our rural population. At this period it was with *that* portion of heathenism alone that Christianity came in contact, to meet a foe.

Very different, however, was the state of the cultivated and the rich. They had lost their religion. Their civilization and their knowledge of the world had destroyed that; and that being lost, they retained no natural vent for the energies of the restless Greek character. Hence out of their high state of intellectual culture there arose a craving for "Wisdom:" not the wisdom which Solomon spoke of, but wisdom in the sense of intellectual speculation. The energy which had found a safe outlet in War now wasted itself in the Amphitheatre. The enthusiasm which had been stimulated by the noble eloquence of patriotism now preyed on glittering rhetoric. Men spent their days in tournaments of speeches, and exulted in gladiatorial oratory. They would not even listen to a sermon from St. Paul, unless it were clothed in dazzling words and full of brilliant thought. They were in a state not uncommon now with fine intellects whose action is cramped. Religion, instead of being solid food for the soul, had become an intellectual banquet. That was another difficulty with which Christianity had to deal.

The next thing we observe as influencing Corinthian society is, that Corinth was the seat of a Roman provincial government. There was a Roman deputy there, that is, a proconsul: "Gallio was deputy of Achaia." Let it surprise no one if I say that this was an influence *favorable* to Christianity. The doctrine of Christ had not as yet come into direct antagonism with Heathenism. It is true that throughout the Acts we read of persecution coming from the Greeks, but at the same time we invariably find that it was the Jews who had "stirred up the Greeks." The persecution always arose first on the part of the Jews; and, indeed, until it became evident that in Christianity there was a Power before which all the principalities of evil, all tyranny and wrong, must perish, the Roman magistrates generally de-

fended it, and interposed their authority between the Christians and their fierce enemies. A signal instance of this is related in this chapter. Gallio, the Roman proconsul, dismisses the charge brought against the Christians. "And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters."

And his judgment was followed by a similar verdict from the people; for Sosthenes, the ringleader of the accusation, was beaten by the mob before the judgment-seat. "And Gallio cared for none of those things," that is, he took no notice of them, he would not interfere. He was, perhaps, even glad that a kind of wild, irregular justice was administered to one who had been foremost in bringing an unjust charge. So that instead of Gallio being, as commentators make him, a sort of type of religious lukewarmness, he is really a specimen of an upright Roman magistrate. But what now principally concerns us in the story is, that it is an example of the way in which the existence of the Roman government at Corinth was, on the whole, an advantage for the spread of the Gospel.

The last element in this complex community was the Jews. Every city, Greek or Roman, at this time was rife with them. Then, as now, they had that national peculiarity which scatters them among all nations, while it prevents them from amalgamating with any: which makes them worshippers of Mammon, and yet, withal, ready to suffer all things, and even to die, for their faith. In their way they were religious; but it was a blind and bigoted adherence to the sensuous side of religion. They had almost ceased to believe in a living God, but they were strenuous believers in the virtue of ordinances. God only existed to them for the benefit of the Jewish nation. To them a Messiah must be a World-prince. To them a new revelation could only be substantiated by marvels and miracles. To them it could have no self-evident spiritual light; and St. Paul, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, describes the difficulty which this tendency put in the way of the progress of the Gospel among them in the words: "The Jews require a sign."

## II. Inquiry respecting the Apostle Paul.

To this society, so constituted, so complex, so manifold, St. Paul came, assured that he was in possession of a truth which was adapted and addressed to all, "the power of God

unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." For this work the Apostle was peculiarly assisted and prepared.

1. By the fellowship of Aquila and Priscilla. We read that when he came to Corinth he found a certain Jew named Aquila, lately come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because the Emperor Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome; and that he came to them.

St. Paul had a peculiar gift from God, the power of doing without those solaces which ordinary men require. But we should greatly mistake that noble heart, that rare nature, if we conceived of it as hard, stern, and incapable of tender human sympathies. Remember how, when anxious about these very Corinthians, "he felt no rest when he found not Titus his brother at Troas." Recollect his gentle yearnings after the recovery of Epaphroditus. Such an one thrown alone upon a teeming, busy, commercial population, as he was at Corinth, would have felt crushed. Alone he had been left, for he had sent back his usual companions on several missions. His spirit had been pressed within him at Athens when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. But that was not so oppressive as the sight of human masses, crowding, hurrying, driving together, all engaged in the mere business of getting rich, or in the more degrading work of seeking mere sensual enjoyment. Nothing so depresses as that. In this crisis, providential arrangements had prepared for him the assistance of Priscilla and Aquila. In their house he found a home—in their society, companionship. Altogether with them, he gained that refreshment for his spirit, without which it would have been perilous for him to have entered on his work in Corinth.

2. He was sustained by manual work. He wrought with his friends as a tent-maker. That was his "craft." For by the rabbinical law all Jews were taught a trade. One rabbi had said that he who did not teach his son a trade, instructed him to steal. Another had declared that the study of theology along with a trade was good for the soul, and without it a temptation from the devil. So, too, it was the custom of the monastic institutions to compel every brother to work, not only for the purpose of supporting the monastery, but also to prevent the entrance of evil thoughts. A wise lesson! For in a life like that of Corinth, in gayety, or a merely thoughtful existence, in that state of leisure to which so many minds are exposed, woe and trial to the spirit that has nothing *for the hands* to do! Misery to him or her who emancipates himself or herself from the universal

law, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." Evil thoughts, despondency, sensual feeling, sin in every shape is before him, to beset and madden, often to ruin him.

3. By the rich experience he had gained in Athens.

There the apostle had met the philosophers on their own ground. He had shown them that there was a want in Human Nature to which the Gospel was adapted; he had spoken of their cravings after the Unknown; he had declared that he had to preach to them that which they unconsciously desired: he had stripped their worship of its anthropomorphism, and had manifested to them that the residuum was the germ of Christianity. And his speech was triumphant as oratory, as logic, and as a specimen of philosophic thought; but in its bearing on conversion it was unsuccessful. His work at Athens was a failure; Dionysius and a few women are all we read of as converted. There was no church at Athens.

Richly taught by this experience, he came to Corinth and preached no longer to the wise, the learned, or the rich. "Ye see your calling, brethren," he said, "how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." God had chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith. St. Paul no longer confronted the philosopher on his own ground, or tried to accommodate the Gospel to his tastes: and then that memorable resolve is recorded, "I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." Not the crucifixion of Christ; but Christ, and that Christ crucified. He preached Christ crucified, though the Greeks might mock and the Jews reject him with scorn—Christ *as* Christianity; Christ His own evidence. We know the result; the Church of Corinth, the largest and noblest harvest ever given to ministerial toil.

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## LECTURE II.

1 CORINTHIANS i. 1-3. *June 8, 1851.*

OUR discourse last Sunday put us in possession of the state of Corinth when the apostle entered it. We know what Corinth was intellectually, politically, morally, and socially. We learnt that it contained a democratic population. We found it commercial, rich, and immoral from its being a trading sea-port. We spoke of its Roman government, which on



the whole acted fairly at that time towards Christianity; of its Greek inhabitants, of whom the richer were skeptics who had lost their religion, and the poorer still full of superstitions, as we discover from the notices of heathen sacrifices which pervade these Epistles. And the last element was the Jewish population, who were devoted to a religion of signs and ordinances.

Our subject for to-day comprises the first three verses of this chapter. From these we take three points for investigation:

- I. The designation of the writers.
- II. The description of the persons addressed.
- III. The benediction.

I. The designation of the writers. Paul "an apostle"—Sosthenes "our brother." An apostle means "one sent," a missionary to teach the truth committed to him; and the authority of this apostolic mission St. Paul substantiates in the words "called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God." There was a necessity for this vindication of his apostleship. At the time of writing this Epistle he was at Ephesus, having left Corinth after a stay of eighteen months. There he was informed of the state of the Church in Achaia by those of the house of Chloe, a Christian lady, and by letters from themselves. From this correspondence he learnt that his authority was questioned; and so St. Paul, unjustly treated and calumniated, opens his Epistle with these words, written partly in self-defense—"Called to be an apostle through the will of God."

In the firm conviction of that truth lay all his power. No man felt more strongly than St. Paul his own insignificance. He told his converts again and again that he "was not meet to be called an apostle;" that he was "the least of all saints," that he was the "chief of sinners." And yet, intensely as he felt all this, more deeply did he feel something above and beyond all this, that he was God's messenger, that his was a true apostleship, that he had been truly commissioned by the King; and hence he speaks with courage and with freedom. His words were not his own, but His who had sent him.

Imagine that conception dawning on his spirit—imagine, if you can, that light suddenly struck out of his own mind in the midst of his despondency—and then you will no longer wonder at the almost joyful boldness with which he stood firm, as on a rock, against the slander of his enemies and the doubtfulness of his friends. Now unless this is felt by us, our life and work have lost their impulse. If we think of our

profession or line of action simply as arising from our own independent choice, or from chance, instantly we are paralyzed, and our energies refuse to act vigorously. But what was it which nerved the apostle's soul to bear reproach and false witness? Was it not this? I have a mission: "I am called to be an apostle through the will of God."

Well, this should be *our* strength. Called to be a carpenter, a politician, a tradesman, a physician—is he irreverent who believes that? God sent me here to cut wood, to direct justly, to make shoes, to teach children: why should not each and all of us feel that? It is one of the greatest truths on which we can rest our life, and by which we can invigorate our work. But we get rid of it by claiming it exclusively for St. Paul. We say that God called the apostles, but does not speak to us. We say they were inspired and lifted above ordinary humanity. But observe the modesty of the apostolic claim. St. Paul does not say, "I am infallible," but only that the will of God has sent him as it had sent others. He did not wish that his people should receive his truth because he the apostle had said it, but because it *was* truth. He did not seek to bind men, as if they were destitute of reasoning, to any *αὐτὸς ἔφη*, as is set up now by Evangelicalism or Popery, but throughout the whole of this Epistle he uses arguments, he appeals to reason and to sense. He convinces men that he was an apostle, not by declarations that they *must* believe him, but by appealing to the truth he had taught—"by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

Further, we see in the fact of St. Paul's joining with himself Sosthenes, and calling him his brother, another proof of his desire to avoid erecting himself as the sole guide of the Church. He sends the Epistle from himself and Sosthenes. Is that like one who desired to be Lord alone over God's heritage? I am an apostle—sent by the will of God; but Sosthenes is my brother. Of Sosthenes himself nothing certain is known. He is supposed by some to be the Sosthenes of Acts xviii., the persecutor, the ringleader of the Jews against the Christians, who was beaten before the judgment-seat of Gallio. If so, see what a conqueror St. Paul, or rather Christianity, had become. Like the apostle of the Gentiles, Sosthenes now built up the faith which once he destroyed. But in truth, we know nothing accurately, except that he was a Corinthian known to the persons addressed, and now with St. Paul at Ephesus. The proper reflection from the fact of his being joined with the apostle, is the humility of St. Paul. He never tried to make a party or form a sect;

he never even thought of placing himself above others as an infallible and autocratic Pope.

II. The persons addressed. "The Church of God which is at Corinth." The Church! What is the Church? That question lies below all the theological differences of the day. The Church, according to the derivation of the word, means the House of God. It is that body of men in whom the Spirit of God dwells as the source of their excellence, and who exist on earth for the purpose of exhibiting the Divine Life and the hidden order of humanity: to destroy evil and to assimilate humanity to God; to penetrate and purify the world, and, as salt, preserve it from corruption. It has an existence continuous throughout the ages; continuous, however, not on the principles of hereditary succession or of human election, as in an ordinary corporation, but on the principle of spiritual similarity of character. The Apostle Paul asserted this spiritual succession when he said that the seed of Abraham were to be reckoned, not as his lineal descendants, but as inheritors of his faith. And Christ, too, meant the same, when He told the Jews that out of the stones before Him God could raise up children unto Abraham.

There is, however, a Church visible and a Church invisible; the latter consists of those spiritual persons who fulfill the notion of the Ideal Church: the former is the Church as it exists in any particular age, embracing within it all who profess Christianity, whether they be proper or improper members of its body. Of the invisible Church the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks; and St. Paul also alludes to this in the description which he gives of the several churches, to whom he writes in language which certainly far transcended their *actual* state. As, for instance, in this Epistle, he speaks of them as "called to be saints," as "temples of the Holy Ghost," and then in another place describes them in their actual state, as "carnal, and walking as men." Again, it is of the visible Church he writes when he reproves their particular errors; and Christ too speaks of the same in such parables as that of the net gathering in fishes both good and bad, and the field of wheat which was mingled with tares.

An illustration may make this plain. The abstract conception of a river is that of a stream of pure, unmixed water, but the actual river is the Rhine, or the Rhone, or the Thames, muddy and discolored, and charged with impurity; and the conception of this or that river necessarily contains within it these peculiarities. So of the Church of Christ.

Abstractedly, and invisibly, it is a kingdom of God in which no evil is; in the concrete, and actually, it is the Church of Corinth, of Rome, or of England, tainted with impurity; and yet just as the muddied Rhone is really the Rhone, and not mud and Rhone, so there are not two churches, the Church of Corinth and the false church within it, but one visible Church, in which the invisible lies concealed. This principle is taught in the parable which represents the Church as a vine. There are not two vines, but one; and the withered branches, which shall be cut off hereafter, are really, for the present, part and portion of the vine. So far then it appears that in any age the visible Church is, properly speaking, *the* Church.

But beyond the limits of the visible is there no true Church? Are Plato, Socrates, Marcus Antoninus, and such as they, to be reckoned by us as lost? Surely not. The Church exists for the purpose of educating souls for heaven; but it would be a perversion of this purpose were we to think that goodness will not be received by God, because it has not been educated in the Church. Goodness is goodness, find it where we may. A vineyard exists for the purpose of nurturing vines, but he would be a strange vine-dresser who denied the reality of grapes because they had ripened under a less genial soil, and beyond the precincts of the vineyard.

The truth is, that the Eternal Word has communicated Himself to man in the expressed thought of God, the life of Christ. They to whom that Light has been manifested are Christians. But that Word has communicated Himself *silently* to human minds, on which the *manifested* Light has never shone. Such men *lived* with God, and were guided by His Spirit. They entered into the Invisible; they lived by faith. They were beyond their generation. They were not of the world. The Eternal Word dwelt within them. For the light that shone forth in a full blaze in Christ, lights also, we are told, "every man that cometh into the world." Instances that lead us to this truth are given in the Scriptures of persons beyond the pale of the Church, who, before their acquaintance with the Jewish nation, had been in the habit of receiving spiritual communications of their own from God; such were Melchisedec, Job, Rahab, and Nebuchadnezzar.

But from this digression let us return to the visible Church of which the Church of Corinth formed a part. It existed, as we have said, to exhibit what humanity should be to represent the Life Divine on earth, and that chiefly in these particulars:

1. Self-devotion: "To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus."

2. Sanctity: "Called to be saints."
3. Universality: "With all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord."
4. Unity: "Of Jesus Christ our Lord, both *theirs* and *ours*." for Christ was their common centre, and every church felt united into one body when they knew that He belonged to *all*, that they all had one Spirit, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father in Jesus Christ.

First, then, the Church exists to exhibit self-devotion. They were "sanctified in Jesus Christ." Now the true meaning of "to sanctify" is to set apart, and hence to consecrate to any work. Thus spoke Christ: "For their sakes I sanctify, set apart, devote Myself." His life was a voluntary devotion of Himself even to the death, as well to save others as to bear witness to the truth. It is this attribute of the Divine nature in humanity that the Church exists to exhibit now on earth. And then it is a Church most truly when it is most plainly devoted. Thus it was in martyr times, when the death and persecuted existence of the saints of God were at once the life-blood of the Church and a testimony to the truth of its Faith. But then it is not, plainly, the Church, where bishops and priests are striving to aggrandize their own power, and seeking to impress men with the idea of the infallibility of their office. When the ecclesiastical dignity makes godliness a means of gain, or when priestcraft exercises lordship over the heritage of God, then it is falsifying its mission, for it is existing to establish, instead of to destroy, selfishness.

Secondly, the Church exists to exhibit sanctity.

The Church of Corinth was formed, as we have said, of peculiar elements. It arose out of a democratic, and therefore a factious, community. It sprang out of an extremely corrupt society, where pride of wealth abounded, and where superstition and skepticism looked one another in the face. It developed itself in the midst of a Judaism which demanded visible proofs of a divine mission. Ancient vices still infected the Christian converts. They carried into the Church the savor of their old life, for the wine-skin will long retain the flavor with which it has been once imbued. We find from these Epistles that gross immorality still existed, and was even considered a thing to boast of. We find their old philosophy still coloring their Christianity, for on the foundation of the Oriental idea that the body was the source of all sin, they denied a future resurrection. We find the insolence of wealth at the Lord's Supper. We find spiritual gifts abused by being exhibited for the sake of ostentation.

Such was the Church of Corinth! This is the early Church so boasted of by some! Yet nowhere do we find, "These are *not* of the Church; these *are* of the Church." Rather *all* are the Church—the profligate brother, the proud rich man, the speculative philosopher, the mere partisan, the superstitious and the seeker after signs, all "are called to be saints." All were temples of the Holy Ghost, though possibly admonished that they might be defiling that temple. "Know ye not that your bodies *are* the temples of the Holy Ghost"—that "Christ is *in you*, except ye be reprobates?" In the face of this the hypothetical view of Baptism is impossible. Publicans and sinners may be in the Church, and yet they are called God's children, His children, redeemed though not sanctified; His people, pardoned and reconciled *by right*, though the reconciliation and the pardon are not theirs *in fact*, unless they accept it. For it is possible to open the doors of the prison, and yet for the prisoner to refuse deliverance; it is possible to forgive an injury, and yet for the injurer to retain his anger, and then reconciliation and friendship, which are things of two sides, are incomplete. Nevertheless, all are designed for holiness, all of the professing Church are "called to be saints." Hence the Church of Christ is a visible body of men providentially elected out of the world to exhibit holiness, some of whom really manifest it in this life, while others do not; and the mission of this society is to put down all evil.

Thirdly, its universality: "With all who, in every place, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."

The Corinthian Church was, according to these words of the apostle, not an exclusive *ἀνθρώπων* Church, but only a part of the Church universal, as a river is of the sea. He allowed it no proud superiority. He would not permit it to think of itself as more spiritual or as possessing higher dignity than the Church at Jerusalem or Thessalonica. They were called to be saints along with, and on a level with, all who named the name of Christ.

Is this our idea when we set up Anglicanism against Romanism, and make England the centre of unity instead of Rome? There is no centre of unity but Christ. We go to God with proud notions of our spirituality and our claims. We boast ourselves of our advantages over Dissenters and Romanists. Whereas the same God is "theirs and ours;" the same Christ is "theirs and ours." Oh! only so far as we feel that God is *our* Father, not *my* Father, and Christ *our* Saviour, not *my* Saviour, do we realize the idea of the

Church. "The name of our Lord Jesus Christ both theirs and ours." What a death-blow to Judaism and party spirit in Corinth!

Lastly, unity.

Christ was theirs and ours. He was the Saviour of all, and the common Supporter of all. Though individual churches might differ, and though sects might even divide those churches, and though each might have a distinct truth, and manifest distinct gifts, yet Christ existed in all. The same one Spirit, His Spirit, pervaded all, and strengthened all, and bound all together into a living and invisible unity. Each in their several ways contributed to build up the same building on the same Foundation; each in their various ways were distinct members of Christ's Body, performing different offices, yet knit into One under the same Head; and the very variety produced a more perfect and abiding unity.

III. The benediction: "Grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

This is, if you will, a formula, but forms like this teach much; they tell of the Spirit from which they originate. The heathen commenced their letters with the salutation, "Health!" There is a life of the Flesh, and there is a life of the Spirit—a truer, more real, and higher Life, and above and beyond all things the apostle wished them this. He wished them neither "health" nor "happiness," but "grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." And now comes the question, What is the use of this benediction? How could grace and peace be given as a blessing to those who rejected grace, and, not believing, felt no peace? Let me try to illustrate this. When the minister in a representative capacity, in the person of Christ, declares absolution to a sinner, his absolution is not lost if the man rejects it, or can not receive it; for it returns to him again, and he has done what he could to show that in Christ there *is* a full absolution for the sinner, if he will take it. Remember what Christ said to the Seventy: "When ye enter into a house, say, Peace be to this house; and if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall return to you again."

The validity of St. Paul's blessing depended on its reception by the hearts to whom it was addressed. If they received it they became *in fact* what they had been by right all along, sons of God: they "set to their seal that God is true."

“Grace and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” For the special revelation of Jesus Christ is, that God is our Father; and when we believe that, not merely with our intellects but with our hearts, and evidence in our lives that we believe it, and that this relationship is the spring of our motives and actions, then will flow in the “Peace which passeth all understanding,” and we are blessed indeed with the blessing of God.

### LECTURE III.

1 CORINTHIANS i. 4-13. *June 29, 1851.*

OUR work to-day will be from the commencement of the fourth to the end of the thirteenth verses, in which we find two points: first, the apostolic congratulations from the fourth to the tenth verse; and, after that, the apostolic warning and rebuke, from the tenth to the end. First, then, the apostolic congratulation—“I thank my God always on your behalf,” etc. Let us remark here how, in the heart of St. Paul, the unselfishness of Christianity had turned this world into a perpetual feast. He had almost none of the personal enjoyments of existence. If we want to know what his life was, we have only to turn to the eleventh chapter of the second Epistle: “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned,” etc. That was his daily outward life; yet we shall greatly mistake the life of that glorious apostle if we suppose it to have been an unhappy one. It was filled with blessedness; the blessedness which arises from that high Christian faculty through which a man is able to enjoy the blessings of others as though they were his own. Personally we get very little in this world. The prizes are few: and if we are to mourn that we never had a whole kid to ourselves “to make merry with,” life will become desolate indeed. Only by saying, “It is meet we should rejoice and be glad” with our brethren, can life be a blessing. *Then* it becomes a perpetual feast. All joys of others become ours:

“I saw thee eye the gen’ral mirth  
With boundless love.”

“I thank my God always on your behalf.” Thus the apostle, in all his weariness and persecutions, was nevertheless always rejoicing with his Churches; and especially he re-



joiced over the gifts and graces given to the Corinthians, of which he here enumerates three: first, utterance, then knowledge, and then the grace of that peculiar attitude of expectation with which they were looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks of the gift of utterance, and we shall understand his reason for calling it a gift rather than a grace, when we remember that, in his conception, charity was far above knowledge. To him a blessing was nothing, unless it could be imparted to others. Knowing a truth is one thing: being able to express it is quite another thing: and then, again, to be *able* to express a truth is one thing; but to *dare* to do it is another thing altogether. "Utterance" implies both power and courage. Hence it comes to pass that the deepest theologians are not necessarily the world's greatest benefactors. A truth hidden is unproductive. And therefore the power of utterance becomes, by the grace of God, truly a faculty divine.

But again, there may be utterance without knowledge. St. Paul desired utterance in order to speak out something in him. With many persons utterance is only verbiage, concealing the poverty of thought in a mere fluency of words. Accordingly, in this day, when utterance abounds, when every platform, every pulpit, or journal teems with utterances, the thing to be pressed upon us is, that knowledge is a grace. Let us seek, not merely to have utterance, but to have something worthy of uttering. In this present Babel of politics and theology, let us learn the dignity of silence: let us be still—silent before God, that we may have knowledge. To know! how blessed! Be sure you speak that you do know, and nothing else. St. Paul thanks God for the knowledge his converts possessed; for utterance without knowledge is worthless. He did not value these things merely for themselves, but only as they were means to an end—channels for conveying truth to others.

The last gift for which the apostle thanks God in this place was their attitude of expectation—they were waiting for the coming of the Lord. He says, "So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the Lord;" as though that were the best gift of all; as if that attitude of expectation were the highest that can be attained here by the Christian. It implies a patient, humble spirit, one that is waiting for, one that is looking forward to, something nobler and better. The apostle seems by this to tell us that the highest spirit is shown rather in calm expectation of that Kingdom, than in disputing *how* it shall come; in believing that it must come, and silently waiting for God's own time for the revealing.

We make two observations on this point :

1. We are to look for a Church of the future—not of the past, nor of the present. The coming of Christ—whatever that means—includes the perfect state of human society. Not hereafter, in a world beyond, but here, the coming of Christ to *us*, not our going to Him. And the perfect attitude is to be looking forward to this: not busying ourselves in dreams about, and mournings after, the past, nor complacently praising the present, but thankful to God for what we have, feeling that the past was necessary; and still dissatisfied with ourselves, hoping something better yet, both for God's Church and World.

2. It implies a humble expecting state: not dogmatizing, not dreading, but simply waiting. The kingdom of God is within us; but the kingdom of God developed will be as the lightning, sudden and universal. Therefore our Lord says, Go not forth if any man says, "Lo! here, or lo! there." Be quiet—it will come. Patiently, humbly, watchfully waiting for that which shall be—that should be our Christian attitude.

St. Paul's congratulation contains a ground of hope for the continuance and successful issue of those blessings—"God shall confirm you to the end;" and again, "God is faithful." He relies not on any stability of human goodness, he knows that he can not trust to their inherent firmness or fidelity; his ground of confidence for the future is rather in the character of God. It might be perfectly true that the Corinthians had these gifts and powers. But who does not know that human excellence is unstable? Who could secure to them that this should last? Had not Saul once had the Spirit of the Lord? Had not Judas once had gifts? Who could say that the Corinthians might not fall away, and make shipwreck of their faith? The apostle answers this, not by assuring them that their habits had gained stability, not by saying that they were too good for God to desert them, not by counting on their faithfulness to God, but on God's faithfulness to them. Not our fidelity to God, but God's fidelity to *us*. He loves us better than we do ourselves.

Of course this doctrine may be misused. We may rest upon it too much, and so become unwatchful and supine; but, nevertheless, it is a most precious truth, and without some conviction of this I can not understand how any man dares go forth to his work in the morning, or at evening lay his head on his pillow to sleep. We now pass on, secondly, to consider the apostle's warning and reproof.

Parties had arisen in Corinth: let us endeavor briefly to understand what these parties were. You can not have read the Epistles without perceiving that the apostles taught very differently each from the other—not a different Gospel, but each one a different side of the Gospel. (Contrast the Epistles of St. Paul with those of St. Peter or St. John.) These modes of teaching were not contrarieties, but varieties, and together they made up the unity of the Church of Christ. The first party in Corinth of which we shall speak was that one which called itself by the name of Paul; and the truths which they would chiefly proclaim would doubtless be those of liberty and universality. We are all aware that the teaching of the Apostle Paul differed in some respects from that of the others—differed at least in the prominence which it gave to certain truths. He taught with peculiar prominence the doctrines of justification by faith, the salvability of the Gentiles, and the doctrine of Christian liberty; and he called this, the Gospel, *my* Gospel—not the only Gospel, but simply those truths of the Gospel which were especially given to him to teach. Moreover, St. Paul was not ordained like other teachers, but was called suddenly by special revelation of the Lord. He frequently refers to this, and declares that he was taught—not of man, but of God only.

There were men in the Church of Corinth who exaggerated all this, and said, This is the truth and nothing else; accordingly they took the doctrine of justification by faith, and made it an excuse for licentiousness—the doctrine of Christian liberty became to them but a cloak of maliciousness. They took the doctrine of the spiritual resurrection taught by the apostle, and held that *that* was the only resurrection; that there was no immortality; that the resurrection was but the regeneration of society. And this led St. Paul to say that some among them taught that the resurrection was past already.

There was also a party naming itself after Apollos; he had been educated at Alexandria, the university of the world, and we are told that he was mighty in the Scriptures, and remarkable for eloquence. The difference between Apollos and St. Paul seems to be not so much a difference of views as in the mode of stating those views: the eloquence of St. Paul was rough and burning; it stirred men's hearts, kindling in them the living fire of truth: that of Apollos was more refined and polished. There was also the party called by the name of Cephas. The Apostle Peter was as gifted in his way as St. Paul; but there was this difference between them, that whereas the Spirit of God had detached St. Paul

from Judaism by a sudden shock, in the heart of St. Peter Christianity had been regularly and slowly developed; he had known Jesus first as the Son of Man, and afterwards as the Son of God. It was long before he realized God's purpose of love to the Gentiles. In his conception the Messiah was to be chiefly King for the Jews; therefore all the Jewish converts, who still clung to very much that was Jewish, preferred to follow St. Peter.

Lastly, there was the party calling itself by the name of Christ himself. History does not inform us what were the special views of this party; but it is not difficult to imagine that they set themselves up as superior to all others. Doubtless they prided themselves on their spirituality and inward light, and looked down with contempt on those who professed to follow the opinion of any human teacher. Perhaps they ignored the apostolic teaching altogether, and proclaimed the doctrine of direct communion with God without the aid of ministry or ordinances; and these, as well as the others, the apostle rebuked. The guilt of these partisans did not lie in holding views differing from each other; it was not so much in saying, "This is the truth," as it was in saying, "This is *not* the truth;" for the guilt of schism is when each party, instead of expressing fully his own truth, attacks others, and denies that others are in the truth at all.

Nothing more certainly eats out the heart and life of religion than party spirit. Christianity is love; party spirit is the death of love. Christianity is union amidst variety of views; party spirit is disunion. We admit the evil of dissent; but party spirit, which sets religious sects against each other, is tenfold worse. In these days of party spirit, be it urged solemnly on our hearts, reiterated as the new commandment of Christianity, that we "love one another." Accuracy of view is worth little in comparison with warmth of heart. It is easy to love such as agree with us. Let us learn to love those who differ from us. Different tempers see truth differently. Party spirit blights and cankers the truth itself.

Avoid, I pray you, the accursed spirit of sectarianism: suffer not yourselves to be called by any party names; "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Let each man strive to work out, bravely and honestly, the truth which God has given to him; and when men oppose us and malign us, let us still, with a love which hopeth all things, strive rather to find good in them—truths special to them; but which as yet they—perhaps unconsciously—falsely represent.

## LECTURE IV.

1 CORINTHIANS i. 14-22. *July 6, 1851.*

LAST Sunday we endeavored to arrive at a right understanding respecting the different parties in the Church of Corinth: let us now pass on to consider the argument by which St. Paul met these sectarians. It was an appeal to Baptism, and, to understand the force of that appeal, we must endeavor to comprehend what Christian baptism is. It contains two things: something on the part of God, and something on the part of man. On God's part it is an authoritative revelation of His paternity: on man's part it is an acceptance of God's covenant. Now there is a remarkable passage in which we find St. Paul expressing the meaning of Baptism as symbolizing submission, discipleship to any particular teacher: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." When the Israelites passed through the Red Sea they cut themselves off forever from Egypt, so that, figuratively speaking, the apostle teaches that in that immersion they were baptized unto Moses, for thereby they declared themselves his followers, and left all to go with him. And so, just as the soldier who receives the bounty money is thereby pledged to serve his sovereign, so he who has passed through the baptismal waters is pledged to fight under the Redeemer's banner against sin, the world, and the devil. And now the argument of St. Paul becomes plain. He argues thus: To whom were ye then baptized? To whom did you pledge yourselves in discipleship? If to Christ, why do ye name yourselves by the name of Paul? If all were baptized into that one Name, how is it that a few only have adopted it as their own?

Upon this we make two remarks: first, the value and blessedness of the sacraments. It will be asked, To what purpose are the sacraments of the Church? if they work no miracle, of what avail are they? Our reply is, Much, every way: among others, that they are authoritative signs and symbols. Now there is very much contained in the idea of a recognized authoritative symbol; for instance, in some parts of the country it is the custom to give and receive a

ring in token of betrothal; but that is very different from the marriage-ring. It is neither authoritative, nor has it the sanction of the Church.

It would have been perfectly possible for man to have invented for himself another symbol of the truth conveyed in Baptism, but then it would not have been authoritative, and consequently it would have been weak and useless. Another purpose of the sacraments is to serve as the epitomes of Christian truth. This is the way in which the apostle frequently makes use of them. From the Epistle to the Romans we find that Antinomianism had crept into the Church, and that there were some who said, that if only men believed, it did not matter that they sinned. How does St. Paul meet this? By an appeal to baptism: he says, "God forbid. How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" "Buried with Him by baptism"—in the very form of that sacrament there was a protest against this Antinomianism. And again, in reference to the Lord's Supper, in the Church of Corinth abuses had crept in; that Holy Communion had become a feast of gluttony and a signal of division. This error he endeavors to correct by reference to the institution of the Supper itself. "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The single loaf, broken into many fragments, contains within it the symbolical truth, that the Church of Christ is one. Here, in the text, St. Paul makes the same appeal: he appeals to Baptism against sectarianism, and so long as we retain it, it is an everlasting protest against every one who breaks the unity of the Church.

The other remark we have to make bears on the peculiar meaning of the sacrament. We are all aware that there are those in the Church of Christ whose personal holiness and purity are unquestionable, who yet believe and teach that all children are born into the world children of the devil; and there are those who agree in this belief, though differing as to the remedy; who hold that the especial and only instrument for their conversion into God's children is baptism; and believe that there is given to the ministers of the Church the power of conveying in that sacrament the Holy Spirit, who effects this wondrous change. I know not that I have misrepresented this view: I do not think I have, yet I say, at least, that if a minister really believes he has this power, then it is only with fear and trembling that he should approach the font in which he is about to baptize a child. But let us try this view by the passage before us: if this view be

true, then the apostle, in saying that he thanked God he had not baptized, thanked God that he had not regenerated any: he rejoices that he had not conveyed the Spirit of God to any one but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas. And all this merely lest he should perchance lie under the slander of having made to himself a party! If we reject this hypothesis as impossible, then it is plain that the view we have alluded to rests on no scriptural basis.

We pass on, lastly, to consider the compromise which St. Paul refused to make: he would make none, either with the Jews in the craving after signs, or with the Greeks in their longing after wisdom. We observe, first, that he refused to make a compromise with the religion of the senses: "the Jews seek a sign." This was the general character of the Jews then, for almost nothing was left to them but the outward and the visible; among the religious there were left only such men as Gamaliel, men who worshipped the outward rather than the inward; men who looked for wonders, who believed that God was in the miraculous, but could not see Him in the things of every-day life; men who believed that when they had the outward, they necessarily had the inward too. For fifteen hundred years forms and signs had been the craving of the Jews. St. Peter even had a leaning in the same direction. The truth seems to be, that wherever there is life, there will be a form; but wherever a form is, it does not follow that there must be life. St. Paul stood firm: Not signs, not symbols, not even sacraments, but Christ. Neither would he make any compromise with the craving after an intellectual religion. There was a diametrical contrast between the Jewish and the Grecian spirit: one seemed all body, and the other all mind.

The wisdom of which St. Paul speaks appears to have been of two kinds—speculative philosophy, and wisdom of words—eloquence. The Greeks had deified wisdom; and St. Paul's language was that which ought to be written over the door of every school: We worship not Minerva, but Christ. Christian brethren! it is important to dwell upon this, for there is, in our day, a marvellous idolatry of talent; it is a strange and a grievous thing to see how men bow down before genius and success. Draw the distinction sharp and firm between these two things—goodness is one thing, talent is another. It is an instructive fact that the Son of Man came not as a scribe, but as a poor working-man. He was a teacher, but not a rabbi. When once the idolatry of talent enters the Church, then farewell to spirituality; when men ask their teachers, not for that which will make them more

humble and Godlike, but for the excitement of an intellectual banquet, then farewell to Christian progress. Here also St. Paul again stood firm—not wisdom, but Christ crucified. St. Paul might have complied with these requirements of his converts, and then he would have gained admiration and love—he might have been the leader of a party, but then he would have been false to his Master—he would have been preferring self to Christ.

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## LECTURE V.

1 CORINTHIANS i. 23, 24. *July 20, 1851.*

IN the course of our exposition of this Epistle, we have learnt the original constitution of Corinthian society, and have ascertained the state of the religious parties in that city at the time St. Paul wrote: we have seen that the Apostle Paul refused to make a compromise with any of these parties. It remains for us now to consider, first, the subject which he resolved to dwell upon, and then the results of this teaching on the different classes of his hearers. His subject was “Christ crucified.” The expression, “preaching Christ,” is very much misunderstood by many persons. It is, therefore, incumbent on us to endeavor calmly to understand what the apostle meant by this. If I say that Newton is taught in our universities, I mean his doctrines are taught; and to preach Christ crucified is to preach His doctrines. In Acts xv. 21, we read: “Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him.” The reading of the Pentateuch was the preaching of Moses. To give a man, is to give the man’s mind; and therefore, though it may be that the name of Christ has not been pronounced, yet, if the spirit of Christ’s doctrine has been given, so far there has been a preaching of the Redeemer. It is setting forth His doctrines in contradistinction to those of the World.

For example, the world says, Resent an injury; Christ says, Forgive your enemies. If, therefore, we preach forgiveness, are we not thereby preaching Christ, even though no distinct mention may be made of his Divinity or of the doctrine of the Atonement? The world says, Indulge your inclinations: Christ says, Be pure in the last recesses of your mind. He, then, who lives a pure life is teaching Christ, even though he may not on every occasion name Him. In the Sermon on the Mount there is contained no reference to any



one special doctrine of Christianity, as we should call it; nor in the Epistle of St. James is there found one word respecting the doctrine of the Atonement; but if we take this sermon or this epistle, and simply work out the truths therein contained—tell us, are we not thereby preaching Christ? To preach goodness, mercy, truth, not for the bribe of heaven or from the fear of hell, but in the name of God the Father, is to preach Christ.

Once more: the expression preaching Christ implies preaching truth in connection with a *person*; it is not merely purity, but the Pure One; not merely goodness, but the Good One, that we worship. Let us observe the twofold advantages of this mode of preaching: first, because it makes religion practical. Some of the Greek teachers were also teaching purity, goodness, truth; they were striving to lead men's minds to the First Good, the First Fair. The Jewish rabbis were also endeavoring to do the same, but it is only in Christ that it is possible to do this effectually. Christian brethren, it is only in Christ that we find our ideal realized. There are times when a dark skepticism envelops our hearts; we turn to the world, and find that all is selfishness there; we turn to our own hearts, and there we find only pollution and corruption: it is when we turn to the Perfect One, we feel that God has once been upon this earth within the limits of humanity, it is in "God manifest in the flesh" that goodness becomes possible. The second advantage in preaching Christianity in connection with a *person* is, that it gives us something to adore, for we can adore a *person*, but we can not adore *principles*.

Lastly, to preach Christ is to preach the doctrine of surrender to the will of God. The religion of Christ has been well called the religion of Divine Humility. St. Paul would not preach Christ the conqueror, but Christ the crucified, Christ the humble. You may know a man when once you know what it is he worships. The apostle was surrounded by all the wisdom and beauty and glory of Corinth, and yet he could turn away and declare his determination of knowing nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. There was but one thing before which his heart was prostrated in deepest adoration, and that was the loving, humble, crucified Man of Nazareth. This is Christianity; love to God and love to man, that surrender of self-will through life and death which marks the whole existence of the Redeemer.

We are, in the second place, to consider the results of this teaching on the several classes of his hearers. To the Jew it was a stumbling-block, something over which he could not

pass; the Jew could not receive the Gospel, unless accompanied by signs and miracles to prove that it was from God. To the Greeks it was foolishness, for the apostle spoke to them as an uneducated, uncultivated man; and they missed the sophistry, the logic, and the brilliant eloquence of their professional orators. Neither could they see what advantage his teaching could be to them, for it would not show them how to form a statue, build a temple, or make a fortune, which things they looked upon as the chief glories of life. But there was another class on whom his words made a very different impression. They are those whom the apostle describes as "the called." To them Christ was the power and the wisdom of God. He does not mean to assert here the doctrine of an arbitrary Election or Predestination; on the contrary, he says that this calling was in respect of inward fitness, "believing," and not of outward advantages. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." God prepares the heart of man for the reception of the Gospel—that is God's blessed plan of election.

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## LECTURE VI.

### 1 CORINTHIANS ii. 1-7.

THE subject of the apostle's ministrations at Corinth has already been defined. We found that it was Christ crucified, and we endeavored to explain what was meant by this expression. Here again, in the second verse of the second chapter, we meet with the same resolve of St. Paul's—"not to know any thing among them save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Our attention can not be drawn too often to the distinction between preaching Christ crucified and the crucifixion of Christ. You are aware that it is said by some that the Gospel is not preached unless the crucifixion be named. Now the apostle did not preach that; but he preached Christ—Christ the Example—Christ the Life—Christ the Son of Man—Christ the Son of God—Christ risen—Christ the King of Glory.

But ever and unfaillingly he preached that Christ, as a humbled Christ crucified through weakness, yet living by the power of God. Because obedient unto death, therefore God also had highly exalted Him. Christ crucified, in opposition to the idea of Christ the Conqueror, or Christ the

Philosopher; by preaching which he might have won both Jews and Greeks. We will consider the spirit or tone in which St. Paul preached.

And first, it was in a decisive tone of personal conviction. It was "the testimony of God." It was not an opinion. Observe he does not say, "I think so," but "God says so." So, in writing to the Galatian Church, he says: "But I certify you brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

St. Paul was no hired teacher—not an official expounder of a system. He preached what he believed. He felt that his words were eternal truth, and hence came their power. He preached ever as if God Almighty were at his side.

Hence, too, arises the possibility of discarding elegance of diction and rules of oratory. For it is half-way towards making us believe, when a man believes himself. Faith produces faith. If you want to convince men, and ask how you shall do it, we reply, Believe with all your heart and soul, and some soul will be surely kindled by your flame.

Secondly, it was in a spirit of self-abnegation. "I determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." He was entirely emptied of all reflex references to self. There were no side-glances at his own prospects, his own reputation, his own success. And this sincerity and self-forgetfulness was a source of power. It was so with the Baptist, who declared of Christ: "He must increase, but I must decrease." I said last Sunday, that in any work which is to live, or be really beautiful, there must be the spirit of the Cross. That which is to be a temple to God must never have the marble polluted with the name of the architect or builder. There can be no real success, except when a man has ceased to think of his own success. A man is truly saved only when he has ceased to think of his own salvation.

Thirdly, it was a spirit of personal lowliness. "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." Partly, this refers to his bodily infirmities and personal disadvantages; but partly, too, it means deep humility and unaffected modesty. For the expression "fear and trembling" can not have reference to his bodily infirmities.

Now, remember who it was who said this—the bold, daring St. Paul, whose soul was all of flame, whose every word was a half-battle, who stood alone on Mars Hill, and preached to the scoffing Athenians "Jesus and the Resurrection." How little they who heard his ponderous sentences could have conceived that "weakness, and fear, and much trembling" of the invisible spirit!

But again : see how this tells on the tone of his ministry. St. Paul did not begin with asserting his prelatical dignity and apostolical authority. He began with declaring truth, and that "in trembling." Then, when men disputed his right to teach, he vindicated his authority, but not till then. And this is a lesson for modern times. The Apostolical Succession is not the ground on which we can claim to be the Nation's teachers. It is true for Order—but not for Truth. Each minister must prove his apostolical succession by apostolic truthfulness, sincerity, and courage—as St. Paul proved his—and by his charity, and by his Christlike meekness. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."

The test of his truthfulness being "in demonstration of the spirit and of power."

NOTE.—Hebraism, Rom. viii. 21. "Glorious liberty." What is meant by "powerful spirit?"—Proof.

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## LECTURE VII.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 1-10. *November 2, 1851.*

THE two former chapters of this Epistle refer to St. Paul's ministry while at Corinth, where there existed a church made up of very peculiar elements. The first of these was Roman, and composed of freedmen, through whose influence society became democratic. The second element was Greek, refined, intellectual, inquisitive, and commercial, and this rendered the whole body restless, and apt to divide itself into parties. In addition to these was the Jewish element, which at this time had degenerated into little more than a religion of the senses. From all this there arose, first, a craving for an intellectual religion—appealing merely to taste and philosophical perceptions. But St. Paul refused to preach to them eloquently or philosophically, "lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect." St. Paul knew that the human heart often rests in eloquent expression of religious sentiment, instead of carrying it on into religious action. For strong feelings often evaporate in words. Strong expressions about self-sacrifice or self-denial, about a life sustained high above the world, often satisfy the heart, and prevent it from rising to the grace talked about; whereas Christianity is not a Creed, but a Life, and men who listen to a preacher only to find an intellectual amusement, or pictures of an

ideal existence, are not thereby advanced one step nearer to the high life of a Christian.

Secondly. From the Jewish element there arose a craving for a religion of signs; and St. Paul refused to teach by signs. He would not base Christianity upon miracles, or external proofs; because truth is its own evidence, and the soul alone must be the judge whether a truth is from God or not. Miracles address the senses, and the appetites of hunger and thirst; and it were preposterous to say that the eye, the ear, or the touch can determine accurately of Divine truth while the soul can not; that the lower part of our nature is an unerring judge, while the soul alone is not infallible in its decisions. For "the natural man (understandeth) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, but the wisdom of God, which is hidden in a mystery."

A third consequence of this peculiar constitution of Corinthian society was its party spirit. This arose out of its democratic character. Faction does not rend a society in which classes are indisputably divided beyond appeal, as is the case in Hindoostan. Where superiority is unquestioned between class and class, rivalry will exist only between individuals. But where all are by social position equal, then there will be a struggle for superiority; for in God's world there is not one monotony of plains without hills, nor a human society on one dead level of equality. There is an *above*, and there is a *below*. There are angels, principalities, powers there; and here orders, degrees, and ranks. And the difficulty in social adjudication is, to determine who ought to be the leaders, and who are to be the led; to abolish false aristocracies, and to establish the true. Now, to say that this is what men aim at, is to say that dispute, faction, party spirit, animosity, must exist till that real order is established which is called the kingdom of God on earth; in which each person is in his right place, and they only rule who are fit to rule. To-day, therefore, our subject will relate to this third consequence; and I shall speak of St. Paul's spiritual treatment of the Corinthian Church whilst in a state of faction.

I. His economic management of truth.

II. His depreciation of the Human in the march of progress, by his manifestation of God in it.

I. His economic management of truth.

I use this word, though it may seem pedantic, because I

find no other to answer my purpose so well ; it is borrowed from the times of the early Christian Church : "Economic," when used in reference to the management of a household, means a frugal use of provision in opposition to extravagant expenditure. An economist apportions to each department the sum necessary, and no more.

And in the spiritual dispensation of truth, economy means that prudent distribution which does not squander it uselessly away when it can do no good, but which apportions to each age, and to each capacity, the amount it can turn to good account. It implies a prudent, wise reserve. Now the principle of this we find stated in the second verse : "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat." And although, in its application, some errors might be committed by withholding truths which should be granted, and by failing to distribute them at the required time, still the principle is a simple and a true one. For different ages, different kinds of food. For childhood, or "babes in Christ," milk. For them that are of full age, or who have the power of discerning both good and evil, "strong meat." But reverse this, and the child becomes sick and fevered. And the reason of this is, that what is strength to the man is injury to the child—it can not bear it.

The doctrine which the apostle calls "strong meat," if taught at first, would deter from further discipleship ; and Christ expresses the same thing when He says : "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out." Now this, remember, was said immediately after the disciples of John had asked why Jesus had not taught the same severe life (the type of which was fasting) which John had. And so, too, Christ did not preach the Cross to His disciples at first. The first time He did preach it, it shocked them. For it was not until after Peter's memorable acknowledgment of Him in these words, "Thou art the Christ," that He revealed to them His coming death, which even then resulted in a kind of revolt against Him, drawing from Peter the exclamation, "That be far from thee, Lord."

Such a case of defection actually did occur in the behavior of the young ruler, who forced, as it were, from Christ a different method of procedure. At first Jesus would have given him mere moral duty : "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery : Do not kill." But not satisfied with this, he asked for Perfection. "What lack I yet ?" And then there was nothing left but to say : "If thou wilt

be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow Me." For, observe, "strong meat" does not mean high doctrine, such as Election, Regeneration, Justification by Faith, but "Perfection:" strong demands on self, a severe, noble life. St. Paul taught the Corinthians all the doctrine he had to teach, but not all the conceptions of the Blessed Life which he knew of. He showed them that, leaving the principles of doctrine, they were to keep themselves in the love of Christ, and be strengthened more and more with His Spirit in the inner man, growing up unto Him in all things. But all this by degrees. And thus of the weak we must be content to ask for honesty, justice; not generosity, not to sell all, but simple moral teaching: "Thou knowest the commandments."

From a child we must not ask sublime forgiveness of injuries. That which would be glorious in a man might be pusillanimity in a boy. But you must content yourself at first with prohibiting tyranny. There is no greater mistake in education than not attending to this principle. Do not ask of your child to sacrifice all enjoyment for the sake of others; but let him learn, first, not to enjoy at the expense, or the disadvantage or suffering of another.

Another reason for not neglecting this is, the danger of familiarizing the *mind* with high spiritual doctrines to which the *heart* is a stranger, and thus engendering hypocrisy. For instance, self-sacrifice, self-denial, are large words, which contain much beauty, and are easily got by rote. But the facility of utterance is soon taken for a spiritual state; and while fluently *talking* of these high-sounding words, and of man's or woman's mission and influence, it never occurs to us that as yet we have not power to *live* them out.

Let us avoid such language, and avoid supposing that we have attained such states. It is good to be temperate; but if you are temperate, do not mistake that for self-denial, or for self-sacrifice. It is good to be honest, to pay one's debts; but when you are simply doing your duty, do not talk of a noble life. Be content to say, "We are unprofitable servants—we have done that which was our duty to do."

The danger of extreme demands made on hearts unprepared for such is seen in the case of ananias. These demands were not, as we see, made by the Apostles; for nothing could be wiser than St. Peter's treatment of the case, representing such sacrifice as purely voluntary, and not compelled. "While it remained, was it not thine own: and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" But public opinion, which had made sacrifice *fashionable*, demanded it. And it

was a demand like strong meat to the weak, for Ananias was "unable to bear it."

II. The second remedy in this factious state was to depreciate the part played by man in the great work of progress, and to exhibit the part of God.

"Who, then, is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?" "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." In all periods of great social activity, when society becomes conscious of itself, and morbidly observant of its own progress, there is a tendency to exalt the instruments, persons, and means by which it progresses. Hence, in turn, kings, statesmen, parliaments: and then education, science, machinery, and the press, have had their hero-worship. Here, at Corinth, was a new phase, "minister-worship." No marvel, in an age when the mere political progress of the Race was felt to be inferior to the spiritual salvation of the Individual, and to the purification of the Society, that ministers, the particular organs by which this was carried on, should assume in men's eyes peculiar importance, and the special gifts of every such minister, Paul or Apollos, be extravagantly honored. No marvel, either, that round the more prominent of these partisans should gather.

St. Paul's remedy was simply to point out God's part: "Ye are God's husbandry," we are only laborers—different only from wheels and pivots, in that *they* do their work unconsciously, *we* consciously. We execute a plan which we only slightly understand—nay, not at all, till it is completed, like workmen in a tubular bridge, or men employed in Gobelín tapestry, who can not see the pattern of their work until the whole is executed. Shall the hodman boast? Conceive the laborer saying of some glorious piece of architecture: Behold my work! or some poet, king, or priest, in view of some progress of the race, See what I have done! Who is Paul, but a servant of higher plans than he knows? And thus we come to find that we are but parts in a mighty system, the breadth of which we can not measure.

This is the true inspired remedy for all party spirit: "He that planteth and he that watereth are one." Each in his way is indispensable. To see the part played by each individual in God's world, which he alone *can* play; to do our own share in the acting, and to feel that each is an integral, essential portion of the whole, not interfering with the rest; to know that each church, each sect, each man, is co-operating best in the work when he expresses his own individuality (as Paul and Cephas, and John and Barnabas did), in truths



of word and action which others, perhaps, can not grasp—*that* is the only emancipation from partisanship.

Again, observe St. Paul held this sectarianism, or partisanship, to amount virtually to a denial of their Christianity. For, as Christians, it was their privilege to have direct access to the Father through Christ; they were made independent of all men but the one mediator Christ Jesus. Whereas this boast of dependence upon men, instead of *direct* communion with God, was to glory in a forfeiture of their privileges, and to return to the Judaism or Heathenism from which they had been freed. He says: "While one saith I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" So that all sectarianism is slavery and narrowness, for it makes us the followers of such and such a leader. Whereas, says St. Paul, instead of your being that leader's, that leader is yours; your minister, whom you are to use. For "*All* things are yours;" the whole universe is subservient to your moral being and progress. Be free, then, and use them: do not be used by them.

Remark, therefore, how the truest spiritual freedom and elevation of soul spring out of Christian humility. All this liberty and noble superiority to life and death, all this independence of men, of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, as their masters, arises from this, that "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's;" that ye, as well as they, are servants only of Christ, who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him.

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### LECTURE VIII.

\*1 CORINTHIANS iii. 11-23. November 9, 1851.

As the last time we treated of the first ten verses of this chapter, to-day we shall go on to the end, merely recapitulating, beforehand, the leading subjects we were then led to enlarge upon; which were, first—St. Paul's treatment of the Corinthian Church when it was in a state of schism, broken up into parties; one party following Apollos, attracted by his eloquence; another, St. Paul, attracted by his doctrine of Christian liberty; another, St. Peter, whom they looked on as the champion of the Judaistic tendency; while another called themselves by the name of Christ. And the schism which thus prevailed was no light matter, for it was not only a proof of carnal views, but it amounted also to a denial of Christianity. For men emancipated by Christ, and given di-

rect access to God, to return again to an allegiance to *men*, and dependence upon them, was voluntarily to forfeit all Christian privileges. It is very interesting to observe the difference in St. Paul's treatment of the Corinthian Church from his treatment of other Churches. He says to them: "I have fed you with milk; for hitherto ye were not able to bear meat, neither yet now are ye able." There is a remarkable difference between this Epistle to the Corinthians and that to the Ephesians. It is not in the former that we find the apostle speaking of the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge; nor do we there find him speaking of the beauty and necessity of self-sacrifice. These were subjects too high for them as yet, but instead we find him dealing almost entirely with the hard, stern duties and commandments of every-day life.

St. Paul's twofold method of dealing with the Corinthian Church in their state of faction was:

1. Through an economic reserve of truth.

By which we understood that first principles only were distributed to feeble minds, to men who were incapable of the Higher Life; that they were fed with these, in the same way as children, incapable of receiving meat, are nourished with milk.

2. The depreciation of the human, through the reduction of ministers to their true position; by pointing out that they were only laborers, servants in God's world—only a part of the curious clock-work of this world of His. Thus each would be a part of one great whole, each would be called upon to work, as essential to this, but not to exhibit his *own* idea; each would best preserve his own individuality, when most acting as a fellow-worker with God.

Now observe! Here was a true notion of Christian unity as opposed to schism. "He that planteth and he that watereth are one." This is the idea I have so often given you—unity in variety. St. Paul did not say, You are wrong, you ought to be all of one way of thinking. No; he said rather, There is one truth, the ritualistic truth, in St. Peter's and St. James's mind. There is another, the truth of Christian liberty, which I teach you. There is another, the truth of grace and beauty, in Apollos. And all *together* build up a Church. And he made use of two metaphors, drawn from agriculture and architecture. How foolish it would be to dispute about the respective merits of planting and watering! Could there be a harvest without either? How foolish to talk of the superiority of capital over labor, or labor over capital! Could any thing be done without both? Again, who would

dream in architecture of a discussion about the comparative importance of the foundation and the superstructure? Are not both necessary to each other's perfection? And so to dispute whether the Gospel according to St. Paul or St. James is the right Gospel, to call the latter "*Straminea Epistola*," is to neglect the majestic entireness and the unity of the truth of God. Observe, St. Paul did not say, as many now would say, You must attain unity by giving up your own views, and each one holding the same. He did not say, Mine are right, and the followers of Apollos and Peter must follow me; but he said that, whatever became of their particular views, they were to rejoice in this — not that they were Christians of a particular kind, but that they had a common Christianity. There was and could be but one Foundation, and he who worked, whether as builder or architect, on this, was one with all the rest. The chapter concludes with,

I. An address to ministers.

II. To congregations.

I. To ministers. "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." First, then, ministers are to preach as the foundation—Christ.

Now let us protest against all party uses of this expression. The preaching of Christ means simply the preaching of Christ. Recollect what Paul's own Christianity was: a few facts respecting his Redeemer's life, a few of his Master's precepts, such as "It is more blessed to give than to receive," out of which he educted all Christian principles, and on which he built all that noble superstructure — his Epistles. Remember how he sums all up: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." His life, death, and resurrection working daily in us, "being made manifest in our body." And again, "Ever bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." Settle it in your hearts: Christianity is Christ: understand Him, breathe His spirit, comprehend His mind: Christianity is a life, a spirit. Let self die with Christ, and with Him rise to a life of holiness; and then, whether you are a minister or ministered to, you need not care what discussions may arise, nor how men may dispute your Christianity, or deny your share in the Gospel; you stand upon a rock.

Next, on this foundation we are to build the superstructure. Christianity is a few living pregnant *principles*, and on these you may construct various buildings. Thus in doctrine

you may erect on this Calvinism or Arminianism; or, in ecclesiastical polity, you may build on this a severe, simple worship, or a highly ritual one, or an imaginative one with a splendid cultus; or, in life, you may live on this devotionally or actively, you may pursue the life of the hermit of the third century, or of the Christian merchant of the nineteenth. For Christianity is capable of endless application to different circumstances, ages, and intellects.

Now, in the words of this twelfth verse, observe that there are not six kinds of superstructure, but two: gold, silver, and precious stones, which are the materials of the temple; wood, hay, and stubble, with which a cottage is erected; but in these buildings the materials of each are of various degrees of excellence, and in the latter, good, bad, and indifferent. Now what do these symbolize? As I said before, perhaps doctrines or systems; but more probably they are to make us recollect that the Church is made up of *persons* of different kinds of character built up by different ministers. Some of straw, utterly worthless; some of silver, sound, good, but not brilliant men; some of gold, characters in which there seems nothing of base alloy, true to the very centre; some of precious stones, men in whom gifts are so richly mingled with useful qualities, that they are as jewels in the Redeemer's crown. And such was the author of this Epistle. It does our heart good to know that out of our frail humanity any thing so good and great has arisen as the Apostle of the Gentiles.

Now there follows from all this the doctrine of the rewardableness of work. All were one, on the one foundation; yet St. Paul modifies this: they were not one, in such a sense that all their work was equally valuable, for "every man shall receive his own reward according to his labor." It is incredible that the mere theologian defending the outworks, writing a book on the Evidences of Christianity, or elaborating a theological system, shall be as blessed as he who has hungered and thirsted with Christ, and, like Christ, suffered. "To sit on the right hand and on the left of the Father," can be given but to them who have drunk of Christ's cup of self-sacrifice and been baptized with His baptism of suffering. Nevertheless, each in his own way shall gain the exact recompense of what he has done. Therefore, Christian men, work on—your work is not in vain. A cup of cold water, given in the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward.

There is also here a distinction between the truth of work and its sincerity. In that day nothing shall stand but what is true; but the sincere worker, even of untrue work, shall

be saved: "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Sincerity shall save him in that day, but it can not accredit his work. But what is this day? When is this day? Generally speaking, we say that it is Time; but more particularly the trial day, which every advent is, and especially the last: in which nothing will endure but what is real. Nothing gilded or varnished will remain, but only precious stones, gold, silver, and these only so far as they are unmixed; for just as fire burns straw, so must all that is not based on the Truth perish. Then the elaborate systems of theology, built by our subtle, restless, over-refined intellects, shall be tried and found worthless. Then many a Church order, elaborately contrived, shall be found something unnecessarily added to the foundation, and overlying it. And then many a minister, who has prided himself on the number of his listeners, will be stripped of his vain-glory, if the characters which he has produced be found wanting; if that which seems to be souls won for God, turns out to be only hearts won for self. Yet here a consolation is given to us—"But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire;" and this is the comfort. Sincerity does not verify doctrine, but it saves the man; his person is accepted, though his work perish. Hence we trust that many a persecutor like Paul shall be received at last; that many a bigot like James and John, desiring to call down fire from heaven, shall obtain mercy, because he did it ignorantly. He shall be saved, while all his work shall be destroyed, just as, to use St. Paul's metaphor, a builder escapes from his house which has been burnt over his head, and stands trembling, yet safe, looking on his work in ruins, "saved, yet so as by fire."

## II. An address to congregations.

1. A warning against all ministers who should so teach as to split the Church into divisions. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Let us consider in what sense the word "holy" is used. The Bible often speaks of things not as they are actually in themselves, but as they exist in God's idea. So it declares of humanity, that it is "very good;" saying it of *man*, but not of *men*, who are often very bad. And so also the representation of the Church is a thing wholly ideal, without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;" whereas, actual

churches are infinitely below this ideal. Now observe that St. Paul calls all in the Corinthian Church "holy," and this, though he knew that some were even incestuous—nay, though he says, in the very verse where he calls them holy, that some might be defiled, and some destroyed. And hence it follows that we have no right to divide our congregations into regenerate and unregenerate, worldly and unworldly, Christian and un-Christian. Him who doeth this "shall God destroy." Woe, therefore, to that minister who by arbitrary distinctions respecting worldliness, for instance, and unworldliness, so divides the Church of God; making the religious into a party, often making sad hearts which God has not made sad, and nursing a set of Pharisees into a delusion that *they* are a Church of God, because they follow some Paul or some Apollos.

2. A warning against sectarianism, on the ground of Christian liberty. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." Man enters this world, finding himself in the midst of mighty forces, stronger than himself, of which he seems the sport and prey. But soon Christianity reveals to him God's living, personal will, which makes these things co-operate for his good. And so he learns his own free-will, and uses them as the sailor does the winds, which, *as* he uses them, become his enemies or his friends.

Then it is that he is emancipated from the iron bondage to circumstances: then all things are his—this marvellous life, so full of endless meaning, so pregnant with infinite opportunities. Still more death, which *seems* to come like a tyrant, commanding him when it will—death is his in Christ, his minister to lead him to Higher Life. Paul is his, to teach him freedom. Apollos his, to animate him with his eloquence. Cephas his, to fire him with his courage. Every author his, to impart to him his treasures.

But remark that St. Paul refers all this to the universal law of sacrifice: all things are ours on this condition—that we are Christ's. The law which made Christ God's has made us Christ's. All things are yours, that is, serve you; but they only discharge the mission and obey the law involuntarily that you are called on to discharge and obey voluntarily—the great law, which makes obedience Blessedness, the law to which Christ was subject, for Christ "was God's." So that, when the law of the Cross is the law of our being—when we have learnt to surrender ourselves—

then, and then only, we are free from all things: they are ours, not we theirs: we use them, instead of being crushed by them. The Christian is "creation's heir." He may say triumphantly, "The world, the world is mine."

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## LECTURE IX.

1 CORINTHIANS iv. 1-6. *November 16, 1851.*

THE fourth chapter, like the third, divides itself into two sections. From the first to the seventh verse, an address is given to a congregation. From the seventh to the end of the chapter, St. Paul addresses ministers. To-day our subject, comprised in the first six verses, is the true estimate of the Christian ministry. Now the Christian ministry may be either over-glorified or undervalued, and in correction of both these errors St. Paul says, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." We consider, then,

- I. The undue glorification of the Christian ministry.
- II. The depreciation of the same.

I. The Christian minister may be glorified or made an idol of in two ways—by party-worship of the *man*, or by attaching a mystical or supernatural power to the *office*.

First, then, by the worship of the man. This was the particular danger of the Corinthians, as we see distinctly stated in the sixth verse of this chapter. In pronouncing his judgment in this verse, St. Paul, with great delicacy, selects himself and Apollos for his instances, because there could be no suspicion of rivalry between them, for Apollos was of the same school of thought as himself. He speaks of his own party, and that of his friend, as worthy of censure, in order not to blame by name other parties and the sectarian disciples of other teachers in Corinth. And yet how natural! Let us take these cases as specimens of all. Paul and Apollos each taught a truth that had taken possession of their souls. St. Paul preached one, as we know, which he called "my Gospel," one peculiarly his own. Such is the case, too, with an inferior minister. Each man, each teacher, now as then, reveals to his hearers that truth which has most filled his own soul, and which is his peculiarly because it most agrees with his character. Well, this truth of his commends itself to kindred spirits in his congregation: it expresses

their difficulties, it is a flood of light on many a dark passage of their history. No wonder that they view with gratitude, and an enthusiasm bordering on veneration, the messenger of this blessedness. And no wonder that the truth thus taught becomes at last the chief, almost the sole, truth proclaimed by him. First, because every man has but one mind, and must, therefore, repeat himself. And, secondly, because that which has won attachment from his congregation can scarcely be made subordinate in subsequent teaching without losing that attachment; so that, partly for the sake of apparent consistency, partly to avoid offense, and partly from that conservatism of mental habits which makes it so difficult to break through systems, ministers and congregations often narrow into a party, and hold one truth especially. And so far they do well; but if they should go on to hold that truth to the exclusion of all other truths, so far as they do that, it is not well; and nothing is more remarkable than the bitter and jealous antagonism with which party-men who have reached this point watch all other religious factions but their own. And then the sectarian work is done: the minister is at once the idol and the slave of the party, which he rules by flattering its bigotry, and stimulating its religious antipathies.

Now St. Paul meets this with his usual delicacy: "These things I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men more highly than it is written, and that no one of you may be puffed up for one against another." And not for Corinth only, but for all who were, or should be, his brethren in Christ, did St. Paul transfer these things to Apollos and himself—for have I not given you a *home* history?—the exact and likeliest history of many an English party, which began with a truth, and then called it *the* truth; flattering one another, and being "puffed up for one against another," and manifesting that, with all their high professions, they were "carnal, and walked as men." But here let us observe the glorious unselfishness of this noble apostle. Think you there was no fire of ambition in his heart—that ardent, fiery heart? An apostle, yes—but not exempt from temptation: with the feelings and passions of a man! Do you imagine he did not perceive, what is so evident to us, the opportunity within his grasp of being the great leader in the Corinthian Church? Think you that he knew nothing of that which is so dear to many a priest and minister in our day—the power of gaining the confidence of his people, the power of having his every word accepted as infallible?



Yet hear this sublime teacher: I am a minister, a steward only. Who is Paul? I dare not be a party-leader, for I am the servant of Him who came to make all one. He that watereth and he that planteth are all one—they, even those Judaizing teachers who named themselves after Peter, are all servants with me of Christ.

Secondly. There is another mode of undue glorification of the ministry: by attributing supernatural powers and imaginary gifts to the office. This mode was quite different, apparently, from the other: so much so, as plainly to mark a party in the opposite extreme: and it was far more necessary to warn some men against this view; for many who would have refused submission to a man would have readily yielded it to an office. Many will refuse obedience to one standing on his personal gifts, or party views; but when one claiming the power of the keys, and pretending to the power of miraculous conveyance of the Eternal Spirit in baptism, or pretending, in shrouded words of mystery, to transform the elements of bread and wine into the very body and blood of Christ; or, declaring that he has an *especial* power to receive confession, and a miraculous right to forgive sins, *therefore* claims homage from the congregation; then, grave men, who would turn contemptuously from the tricks of the mere preacher, are sometimes subdued before those of the priest. And yet this is but the same thing in another form, against which St. Paul contended in Corinth; for pride and vanity can assume different forms, and sometimes appear in the very guise of humility. Power is dear to man, and for the substance, who would not sacrifice the shadow? Who would not depreciate himself, if by magnifying his office he obtained the power he loved?

We have heard of Bernard, who, professing to be unsecular, yet ruled the secular affairs of the world. We have heard of men who, cut off from human affections, and crushing them relentlessly, have resigned every endearment in life, yet have nevertheless reigned in their sackcloth with a power which the imperial purple never gave. Affecting to live apart from human policy and human business, they spread their influence through every department of human thought, and life, and government. To appear more than human, to seem a spiritual being, above their fellow-men; for this men formerly, as well as now, have parted with all that is best in our humanity, its tenderest affections, its most innocent relaxations, and its most sacred and kindest enjoyments. History affords innumerable examples of this.

## II. The depreciation of the office.

There is a way common enough, but not specially alluded to here, in which the minister of the Church of Christ is viewed simply in connection with an establishment as a very useful regulation, on a par with the institutions of the magistracy and the police. In this light the minister's chief duty is to lecture the poor, and, of all the thousand texts which bear on political existence, to preach from only two, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," and "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers;" to be the treasurer and regulator of the different charitable institutions in the town and village, and to bless the rich man's banquet. Thus the office is simply considered a profession, and the common term "living" is the truest exposition of the dignity in which it is held. It is a "living" for the younger branches of noble houses, and an advance for the sons of those of a lower grade who manifest any extraordinary aptness for learning, and who, through the ministry, may rise to a higher position in social life.

In this view a degrading compact is made between the minister and society. If he will not interfere with abuses, but leave things as they are; if he will lash only the vices of an age that is *gone by*, and the heresies of *other* churches; if he will teach, not the truth that is welling up in his own soul, but that which the conventionalism of the world pronounces to be the Truth—then shall there be shown to him a certain consideration; not the awful reverence accorded to the priest, nor the affectionate gratitude yielded to the Christian minister, but the half-respectful, condescending patronage which comes from men who stand by the Church as they would stand by any other old time-honored institution; who would think it extremely ill-bred to take God's name in vain in the presence of a clergyman, and extremely unmanly to insult a man whose profession prevents his resenting indignities.

Now it is enough to quote the apostle's view, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ," and at once you are in a different atmosphere of thought.

These things are not essential to the position, for that may cease to be respectable. Society may annihilate a church establishment, but yet that which is essential in the office remains: the minister is still a minister of Christ, a steward of the mysteries of God, whose chief glory consists not in that he is respectable, or well-off, or honored, but in that he *serves*, like Him, "Who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Lastly, the office may be depreciated by such a view as these Corinthians were tempted to take. The Corinthians measured their teachers by their gifts, and in proportion to their acceptability to *them*. So now, men seem to look on the ministry as an institution intended for their comfort, for their gratification, nay, even for their pastime. In this way the preaching of the Gospel seems to be something like a lecture, professorial or popular; a thing to be freely found fault with, if it has not given comfort, or shown ability, or been striking or original—a free arena for light discussion and flippant criticism; for, of course, if a man had a right to be an admirer of Paul, he had, also, to be a blamer of Apollos.

Now see how St. Paul meets this. "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment." He simply refuses to submit his authority to any judgment; and this you will say, perchance, was priestly pride, a characteristic haughtiness. Exactly the reverse, it was profound humility. Not because he was above judgment, not because he was infallible, or teaching truths too grand for them, but because he was to be judged before a tribunal far more awful than Corinthian society. Not by man would he be judged, because fidelity is the chief excellence in a steward, and fidelity is precisely that which men can not judge. They can only judge of gifts, whereas the true dignity of their minister consists not in gifts, nor in popularity, nor in success, but simply in having faithfully used his powers, and boldly spoken the truth which was in him.

St. Paul refuses even to pass judgment on himself. He says, "I know nothing by myself." In the common reading this passage would seem to mean, Whatever I know is not by myself, but by a Higher Power; but what the translator meant, and as it would even now be understood by our north-countrymen, is this, "I know nothing against myself." "I am not conscious of untruth, or lack of fidelity."

"Yet," he goes on to say, "am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord." Here, then, is what St. Paul appeals to, for another eye had seen, and He could tell how far the sentence was framed for man's applause; how far the unpleasant truth was softened, not for love's sake, but simply from cowardice. Even the bold unpopularity, that cares not whom it offends, may be, and often is, merely the result of a contentious, warlike spirit, defiant of all around, and proud in a fancied superiority. But God discerns through all this, and sees how far independence is only another name for stubbornness; how even that beautiful avoidance of sectarianism is merely, in many cases, a love of

standing alone; a proud resolve not to interfere with any other man's ministry, or to allow any man to interfere with his.

In applying this to our daily life, we must, then,

1. Learn not to judge, for we do not know the secrets of the heart. We judge men by gifts, or by a correspondence with our own peculiarities; but God judges by fidelity.

Many a dull sermon is the result of humble powers, honestly cultivated, whilst many a brilliant discourse arises merely from a love of display. Many a diligent and active ministry proceeds from the love of power.

2. Learn to be neither depressed unduly by blame, nor, on the other side, to be too much exalted by praise. Life's experience should teach us this. Even in war, honors fall as by chance, with cruel and ludicrous injustice; often the hero whom the populace worship is only made so by accident. Often the coronet falls on brows that least deserve it.

And our own individual experience should teach us how little men know us! How often, when we have been most praised and loved, have we been conscious of another motive actuating us than that which the world has given us credit for; and we have been blamed, perhaps disgraced, when, if all the circumstances were known, we should have been covered with honor. Therefore, let us strive, as much as possible, to be tranquil; smile when men sneer; be humble when they praise; patient when they blame. Their judgment will not last; "man's judgment," literally "man's day," is only for a time, but God's is for eternity. So, would you be secure alike when the world pours its censure or its applause upon you? feel hourly that God will judge. *That* will be your safeguard under both. It will be a small thing to you to be judged of any man's judgment, for your cause will be pleaded before the Judge and the Discerner of all secrets.

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## LECTURE X.

1 CORINTHIANS iv. 7-21. *November 23, 1851.*

THE former part of this chapter is addressed to congregations, in order that a right estimate may be formed by them of the ministerial office, which neither, on the one hand, ought to be depreciated, nor, on the other, to be unduly valued. We have explained how St. Paul's view was in opposition to all tendencies to worship the man, or to represent the office

as magical or mysterious; and, on the other hand, his view was in direct opposition to all opinions which represent it as a creature and institution of the state, or which value it only as a sphere for the exhibition of gifts and talents. And one definition sufficed the apostle: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

And in reference to that right, so liberally assumed, of passing judgment, of awarding praise and blame, of criticising individual ministers, the apostle teaches that the same definition excludes this right, because of the impossibility of judgment; for all that a steward can have of merit is fidelity, and fidelity is exactly that which men can not judge—it is a secret hidden with God. Now this sin of sectarianism was not imputable to the congregation only. It was also shared by their ministers. There were those who made themselves leaders of parties, those who accepted and gloried in adulation, those who unduly assumed mysterious powers, magnifying their office that they might personally have that spiritual power which to most men is so grateful.

And here, again, is shown the apostle's singular delicacy. He names none of those leaders, none of those who were vain of their eloquence or gifts. He only speaks of those who were involuntarily raised to the headship of different factions; Christ the Lord, Cephas, Apollos, and himself. "These things I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." That is, these are named for a general, not a specific purpose, that they might learn not to be puffed up for *any* minister. And just because the accusation is not special, therefore should it be universally applied.

We gain nothing from this chapter if we simply learn the historical fact that in Corinth there were certain parties and sects; and that St. Paul blamed that of Apollos, and that of Cephas, and that likewise which had formed round himself; unless we learn also that there are parties amongst ourselves—one setting up the Church against the Bible, and another the Bible against the Church; one calling itself the "Evangelical" party *par excellence*, affixing special terms to the names of its reviews and magazines, as if no other publications deserved the name of Christian; another party calling itself "Anglo-Catholic," as though true Catholicity was not rather in spirit than in outward form; every party having its organ, its newspapers and reviews, full of faction and bit-

terness, and each branding the other with opprobrious names. And unless we learn that St. Paul would have blamed *us*, and taken *our* party spirit as a proof that we are "carnal, and walk as men," we gain nothing from the delicacy of his abstaining from mentioning *names* that he might teach a *general* principle.

Another lesson, however, we gain. This is an anonymous accusation; but of that rare kind, that not the name of the accuser, but of the accused, is suppressed. If all this were anonymous *then*, surely it should be so with us *now*. Our accusations should be personal, that is, directed against ourselves, for the apostle names himself. There should exist a readiness to see our own faults, and those of our own party or Church; and not only the faults of other parties or other churches.

However, though St. Paul does not name the men, he does not leave them unrebuked. He addresses them in a way that they would understand, and that all would understand for whom comprehension was necessary; for in the seventh verse he turns to those whom he had all along in his mind: "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" And having thus addressed himself particularly to congregations, St. Paul, in conclusion, speaks especially to ministers.

The first principle that he lays down is—A warning to those who fostered the personal worship of the ministers—that is, of themselves.

Secondly. To those who unduly magnified the office.

1. The qualities which are requisite for the higher part of the ministry are—great powers of sympathy; a mind masculine in its power, feminine in its tenderness; humbleness; wisdom to direct; that knowledge of the world which the Bible calls the wisdom of the serpent; and a knowledge of evil which comes rather from repulsion from it than from personal contact with it. But those qualifications which adapt a man for the merely showy parts of the Christian ministry are of an inferior order: fluency, self-confidence, tact, a certain histrionic power of conceiving feelings, and expressing them.

Now it was precisely to this class of qualities that Christianity opened a new field in places such as Corinth. Men who had been unknown in their trades suddenly found an opportunity for public addresses, for activity, and for leadership. They became fluent and ready talkers; and the more shallow and self-sufficient they were, the more likely it was

that they would become the leaders of a faction. And how did the apostle meet this?

He had shown before that Christ was crucified in weakness. Now he shows that the disposition to idolize intellect was directly opposed to this—Christ the crucified was the power of God. So far, then, as they taught or believed that the power lay in gifts, so far they made the Cross of none effect: “If any man among you seemeth to be wise” (*i. e.*, has the reputation), “let him become a fool, that he may be wise.” But he alleges two thoughts, in the seventh verse, to check this tendency. Christian dependence: “Who maketh thee to differ?” Christian responsibility: “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?”

This tendency, which the apostle rebukes, besets us ever. Even at school, in the earliest stage of boyhood, we see that brilliancy is admired, whilst plodding industry is almost sure to be sneered at. Yet which of these two characters would St. Paul approve? Which shows fidelity? The dull mediocre talent faithfully used, or the bright talent used only for glitter and display? St. Paul, in the verse quoted, crushes vanity by reminding us of responsibility. His method is the true one, for we can not meet vanity by denying the value of gifts. If we or our children have beauty of person, have talents and accomplishments, it is in vain we pretend to depreciate, or to shut our eyes to them.

St. Paul did not do this, for he acknowledged their worth. He said, “Covet earnestly the best gifts.” He did not sneer at eloquence, nor contemn learning; but he said, These are your responsibilities. You are a steward: you have received. Beware that you be found faithful. Woe unto you if accomplishments have been the bait for admiration, or if beauty has left the mind empty, or has allured others to evil. Woe, if the gifts and manner that have made you acceptable, have done no more. In truth, this independence of God is man’s fall. Adam tried to be a cause; to make a right; to be separate from God; to enjoy without God; to be independent, having a will of his own: and just as all things are ours if we be Christ’s, so, if we be not Christ’s, if the giver be ignored in our enjoyments and our work, then all things are not ours; but our pleasures are enjoyed, and our gifts used, in the way of robbery. Stolen pleasures; stolen powers; stolen honors; all is stolen when “we glory as if we had not received.”

2. A warning to those who unduly magnified the office.

There were men who prided themselves as being ministers—successors of the Apostles, who exercised lordship, au-

thority, and reigned as kings over the congregations. The apostle says, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich." Be it so. How comes then the contrast? "But God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." Now place these two verses side by side, and think, first of all, of these teachers—admired, flattered, and loaded with presents. See them first made rich, and then going on to rule as autocrats; so that when a Corinthian entertained his minister, he entertained his oracle, his infallible guide, still more, his very religion.

And then, after having well considered this phrase, turn to contemplate the apostolic life as painted in this last verse. If the one be an apostle, what is the other? If one be the high life, the Christian life, how can the other be a life to boast of?

Remark here the irony: "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us." And again: "We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised." It is in vain we deny that these words are ironical. People who look upon Christianity as a mere meek, passive, strengthless, effeminate thing, must needs be perplexed with passages such as these, and that other passage, too, in Christ's lips: "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."—"Full well!" How terrible the irony to call that *well* which was most *ill*! The truth is, that in Christ—in the perfect Human Nature—the manlier and more vigorous feelings and emotions did not undergo excision. Resentment, indignation, these are to be guided, controlled, not cut out. True it is, that in *our* practice they are nearly always *evil*; for does not indignation frequently become spite, and resentment turn to malice? Nevertheless, they are both integral parts of human nature. Our character is composed of these elements. In Christ they existed, how strongly! But yet when He used them to rebuke living *men*, they are changed at once. He blighted Pharisaism with irony and terrible invective. But to the actual, living Pharisee, how tenderly did He express himself! "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." Evil is detestable; and the man who mixes himself with it is so far obnoxious to our indignation. But so far as he is a *man*, he is an object of infinite pity and tenderness.

And in St. Paul's irony we remark somewhat of the same characteristics. It becomes even sarcasm, if you will, but there is no shadow of a sneer in it. He who has never ex-



perienced the affectionate bitterness of love, who has never known how *earnest* irony and passionate sarcasm may be the very language of love in its deepest, saddest moods, is utterly incapable of even judging this passage. And remark how gracefully it turns with him from loving though angry irony, to loving earnestness: "I would to God ye did reign." They were making this a time for triumph, whereas it was the time for suffering. And St. Paul says, I would the time for reigning were come indeed, for then we should be blessed together. Ye are making a noble time of it with this playing at kings! Be it so. Would to God that it were not an anachronism! Would to God that the time for triumph were come indeed, that these factions might cease, and we be kings together!

See, then, here the true doctrine of the apostolical succession. The apostolical office is one thing; the apostolical character, which includes suffering, is quite another thing; often they are totally opposed.

And just as the true children of Abraham were not his lineal descendants, but the inheritors of his faith, so the true apostolical succession consists not in what these men pride themselves upon—their office, their theological attainments, their ordination, the admiration of their flocks, the costly testimonials of affection which had made them "rich;" but it consists rather in a life of truth, and in the *suffering* which inevitably comes as the result of being true. Let bishops, let ministers, let *me* ever remember this.

Now, therefore, we can understand the passage with which he ends: "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me." Only do not misread it. It might sound as if St. Paul were inviting them to become his followers instead of following Cephas or Apollos. But that would be to forget the whole argument. To say that, would have been to have fallen into the very error that he blamed, and to have opposed and contradicted his own depreciation of himself—to have denied every principle he had been establishing. No; you have here no mere partisan trying to outbid and outvie others; it is not the oratory of the platform commending one sect or one society above another.

St. Paul is not speaking of doctrine, but of life. He says that the *life* he had just described was the one for them to follow. In *this*—"Be ye followers of me," he declares the life of suffering, of hardship in the cause of duty, to be higher than the life of popularity and self-indulgence. He says that the dignity of a minister and the majesty of a man consists not in "most reverend," or "most noble," prefixed

to his name; not in exempting himself from the common lot, and affecting not to mix with mean occupations and persons: nor yet in affecting that peculiar spirituality which is above human joys, and human pleasures, and human needs. But it lies in this, in being not superhuman, but human; in being through and through *a man*, according to the Divine idea; a man whose chief privilege it is to be a minister—that is, a servant, a follower of Him who “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

## LECTURE XI.

## THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF ABSOLUTION.

2 CORINTHIANS ii. 10, 11. *November 23, 1851.*

(MORNING SERMON.)

IN order that we may more fully understand the meaning of the sentence pronounced upon the Corinthian sinners by St. Paul, I have determined to enter on the question of Absolution to-day, and have therefore deviated from the direct line of exposition, and taken a text from the Second Epistle, in which the principle of Christian absolution is fully comprised.

In the First Epistle to the Corinthians St. Paul refers to a crime which had brought great scandal on their Church; and it seems that, instead of being shocked, the Corinthians rather gloried in their laxity, or, as they called it, liberality.

On the offender the apostle had demanded that a severe punishment should fall. They were to “put away from themselves that wicked person.” But in the interval which had elapsed between the two Epistles a great change had taken place. The Corinthians had obeyed, and that in earnest. Their indignation and zeal had been thoroughly roused, and the terrible treatment of society had wrought a deep remorse in the offender, which was threatening to pass into despair.

In this Second Epistle, therefore, he requires forgiveness, he reverses his mode of treatment—ii. 6, 7. In the text he ratifies that forgiveness. Here, then, we are brought face to face with the fact of Christian Absolution. For, let us clearly understand: this forgiveness was not forgiveness of an offense against the apostle, or against any man. It was not a debt, nor an insult—it was a crime. And yet, though a

crime against God, St. Paul says, "I forgive it, you must forgive it." He did not say, "He must confess to God, *perhaps* God will forgive." Here there is evidently a sin against God forgiven by man. Here, then, is the fact of absolution.

This is our subject; one which is a battle-ground between Romanists and Protestants. I shall not attempt to steer adroitly a middle course between Romanism and Protestantism, the first asserting an absolving power in the priesthood, the second denying it in every shape and form to any human being. I shall avoid that *via media* which to timid minds seems safe and judicious because not going into extremes, but which does yet, like all weak things, manage to embrace the evils of both, and the good of neither. But, as on other occasions, I shall try to seize that deep truth which lies at the root of both views, and which can alone explain the difficulties which beset the question. We will consider, then,

I. False conceptions respecting absolution.

II. The Scripture principle on which it rests.

1. The first would be a denial *in toto* of the existence of such a power in any sense. There are, and were, men who might have objected to St. Paul, as the Scribes did to his Lord—"Who is this that forgiveth sins also? Who can forgive sins but God only?" And observe there *was* much truth in that objection—Who can forgive sins but God? And if a man may absolve another man, will not sin be committed easily and carelessly? Will not the salutary effect of dread and of uncertainty be done away with? How dangerous to remove the apprehension of punishment! How fearful to send any one to a brother man instead of to God alone! These are plausible difficulties, and in great part true. But still, remember how Christ replied to that objection. He performed a miracle to show that, as He could do the difficult thing—as He could say with power—"Arise, and take up thy bed and walk," so He could do the more difficult—"Thy sins be forgiven thee."

Now it is often said that by that miracle He proved His Godhead, that He took them at their word. "No one can forgive sins but God." See, then, I can forgive; therefore I am God. But to read the passage so is utterly to lose the meaning. He did not say that He forgave as God. He expressly said that He forgave as man—"That ye may know that the *Son of Man* hath power on earth to forgive sins." He says nothing about the forgiveness by God in heaven. All He speaks of is respecting the power of forgiveness by man on earth. But whatever we may make of that passage,

our text is one which can not be twisted. We say, Christ forgave as the Messiah, not as man: He did not speak of a power belonging to *any* son of man, but to *the* Son of Man. Be it so: but here is a passage which can not be so got over. His Apostle Paul, a son of man, uses words identical with His: "To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive*." We are driven, then, to the conclusion that in some sense or other human beings have an absolving power.

2. The second error is that which would confine this power to the Apostles. "St. Paul absolved—yes: but St. Paul was inspired; he could read hearts, and could absolve because he knew when penitence was real; but you must not extend that to men now." In reply to this observation, take two facts: 1. We have been denying for three hundred years that man's forgiveness can be in any sense an assurance of God's. We have fiercely, "like good Protestants," opposed any absolving power in man. What has been our success? Surely it has been failure. We have said, "Go to God, He forgives." But men have not gained rest or peace by this. Out of the very ranks of Protestantism men and women are crying—"Absolve me from the weight of sin that I can not bear alone." Shall we then, in rigid dogmatism, cruelly say, "There is nothing for you beyond this—Go to God," which we have said a thousand times? or shall we say, "It is time to pause and ask ourselves what real truth lies at the bottom of this irrepressible desire? However Rome may have caricatured the truth, let us not fear to search it out."

Again: whether you will or not, this power is a fact; for thus runs Christ's commission to His Church: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." Say, if you will, that was a peculiar power, limited to the Apostles. Nevertheless, the fact can not be controverted, that every day and every hour society—man—exerts this power. For example: There are sins after committing which society permits a return; there are others in which society is inexorable. In military life cowardice is branded with irrevocable infamy. Among women another class of sins admits of no return. You are permitted by the world to defraud your tradesman; debts may be "honorably contracted" which there is no ability of paying; but if a gambler shirks his "debts of honor," he has to fly disgraced. And the results of this are clear. A man may be, in military life, dissipated, which is morally as bad as cowardice; a woman may be selfish or censorious, or kill by bitter words; and yet these are faults not made hopeless by society: they leave room for other excellences—they do

not *blight* character. But for a coward, or a "daughter of shame," once fallen, there is no return. Down, down, and deeper yet to the deeps of infamy, must one sink on whom society has set its black mark.

Here is a fearful exercise of power. The sins which society has bound on earth *are* bound; the sins which society has loosed, are thereby robbed of a portion of their curse. It is a power often wrongly used, but still an incontrovertible, terrific power. Even from unworthy lips, these words, "We forgive," have an absolving power, like all our other powers, capable of perversion and misuse. And such a possibility the apostle intimates here: "Lest Satan should get an advantage over us." What he meant by this expression is told in the seventh verse. For he well knew how the sentence of society crushes. He knew how it drives, first, into despondency, and how despondency seeks a temporary refuge in superstition, and how, that failing, the soul passes into infidelity, desperate and open. That might have been the career of this man. And it would have only proved, that if man will not recognize or allow his power of absolving, he can not hinder the effects and working of his power of binding sins upon the character.

3. The third error is that which monopolizes absolution for the priesthood. The Romanist claims this most largely. He does not confine it to the apostles. He asserts it as the privilege of their successors. He says that the power to bind and loose belongs to the Church now—by a special right delegated to the priesthood only. They cry out for the power of the keys. The descendants of the Apostles have power, and they alone, to bind and loose. "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." Well, the question is, In what sense, and by virtue of what power, the apostles did this? We need no reply beyond the text. If we can find an instance of their doing this, we can understand the nature of the privilege, and to whom it extends. Such an instance we have here. The Apostle Paul, in exercise of the right so delegated, absolves the Corinthian sinner. But observe, in whatever sense he claimed the right for himself, in that sense he also claimed it for the whole Church. He forgave because they did. He asks *them* to forgive. He says, "for your sakes forgave I it." So if the Apostle Paul absolved, then the whole body also of the Corinthian Church absolved.

## II. The principle on which Absolution rests.

It rests on the *mediatorial* character of Humanity. "For

your sakes forgave I it *in the person of*" (*i. e.*, in the stead of) "Christ." But understand that the word "mediatorial" is used by us here, not in the theological, but the natural, popular, and simple sense. It means that which is conveyed through a medium. A mediatorial idea is that through the medium of which we apprehend another idea. As, for example, when the inhabitant of the torrid zone is told that ice, which he has never seen, resembles glass, glass is the mediatorial idea through which the other becomes possible to him. A mediatorial dispensation is one which through the medium of things earthly conveys conceptions otherwise unintelligible, as that of the soul's rest in God through the medium of the Sabbath-day. Now God is knowable by us only through the medium of humanity. The idea of God is a mediatorial idea. The love of God would be unintelligible unless we had loving feelings of our own, unless we felt the love of men to us. An orphan who had never seen his parents, nor known any instance of the parental relation, would be shut out from the conception of all those truths which are conveyed in the announcement—God the Father.

Another remark in passing. Only a man can be the express image of God's person. Only through a man can there be a revelation; only through a perfect man a perfect revelation. Here is the principle of the Incarnation. And God's forgiveness is unintelligible, actually incredible, except through the human forgiveness which we see. And if you were to imagine the case of one to whom human beings had, with no one exception, been unrelenting, then to that one I suppose God's forgiveness would be not only incredible, but also inconceivable. Or, to take a less extreme case. Suppose that this Corinthian offender had been met on every side with horror and detestation, had seen nowhere a pitying eye, in every street had been shunned and shuddered at. Is it not certain, by the laws of our humanity, that this judgment of society would have seemed to him a reflection of the judgment of God, an assurance of coming wrath, a knell of a deeper doom? On the other hand, would not the forgiveness of the Corinthian society have caused the hope of God's forgiveness to dawn upon his heart, made it seem possible, and by degrees probable, actual, certain? And this in exact proportion, just as the men who so forgave were holy men. The more like God they were, the more would their forgiveness be a type and assurance of God's forgiveness. And also, this conviction would become stronger in proportion as this declaration was not the iso-

lated act of one individual, which might seem to be personal partiality, but the act of many, of a society, a body—of the Church.

Let us show this historically. Throughout the ages God has been declaring Himself, in His character as Absolver, Liberator, Redeemer. For the history of the past has not been that of Man trying to express his religious instincts in institutions and priesthods, but of God uttering Himself and His idea through humanity.

1. Moses is called a Mediator in the Epistle to the Galatians. How was this? God sent Moses to deliver his people. "I *am* come to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians." "I will send *thee* unto Pharaoh." And Moses understood his commission. He slew an Egyptian, and he supposed that they would have understood that he was their liberator, that they would have seen in the human deliverer the Divine Arm. God was revealing Himself through Moses as the Avenger and Redeemer.

2. The Judges. First of these came Joshua, whose name, originally, Oshea, or Saviour, had Jah added to it to make this clear, that he was a deliverer in whom was to be seen the Unseen. A "Divine Deliverer," reminding the people that he was but the representative of One whose prerogative it is to break the rod of the oppressor.

3. The Prophets. They developed another kind of deliverance, founded on no prescriptive authority, but only on the authority of truth. They stood up against king and priest. They witnessed against kingcraft and priestcraft, against false social maxims, against superstitions, against all that was enslaving the Jewish soul. And how did they effect this deliverance? They proclaimed God as He is. Their invariable preface was this, "Thus saith the Lord." They fell back on deep first principles. They said, that "to do justice, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God," was better than praying, and fasting, and sacrifice. They revealed and declared the true character of God, which had become incredible to the people through the false glosses it had received. And so the prophet also was the deliverer of his people, loosing them from, not slavery, nor political oppression, but a worse bondage, the bondage which comes from ecclesiastical and civil institutions when they have ceased to be *real*. And thus did they once more exhibit to the world the absolving power of Humanity when it represents accurately the Divine mind and character.

One step farther. There is a slavery worse than all these: the power by which the soul, through ignorance of God, is

bound in sin. Now consider what the Scribes had been doing; they had reduced the teaching about sin to a science; they had defined the nature and degrees of sins; they had priced each sin, named the particular penance and cost at which it could be tolerated. And thus they had represented God as one who, for a certain consideration, might be induced to sell forgiveness, might be bribed to change His will, and forgive those whom He had intended to condemn. Therefore was One manifested who represented the Divine character without flaw; in whom the mediatorial idea was perfect; in whom Humanity was the exact pattern and type of Deity; in whom God appeared as the Deliverer in the highest sense, where every miracle manifested the power to loose, and every tender word the will to forgive; who established the true relation between God and man, as being not that between a judge and a culprit, but as between a Father and a son. For once the love of man was identical with the love of God; for once Human forgiveness was exactly commensurate with the Divine forgiveness: therefore is He the one absolver of the race; therefore has He, *because* the Son of Man, "power on earth to forgive sins;" and therefore every absolver, so far as he would free consciences and characters from sins, must draw his power out of that same humanity. He can free only so far as he represents it, or, as St. Paul expresses it here, "forgive *in the person of Christ*"—that is, representatively, for "person" means the character sustained on a stage, which represents, or is a medium through which the one represented is conceived.

In conclusion, let us make two applications.

1. From the fact that the whole Corinthian Church absolved, learn that the power of absolution belongs to every man as man—as "made in the image of God." It belongs in the highest degree to the man who most truly reflects that image, who most truly stands in the person of Christ. Are you a rigid Protestant, stiffly content with a miserable negative, sturdily satisfied to reiterate forever, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" Well, remember, first, that maxim of which you are so proud was used by the Scribes before you: a superficial half-truth it is, in its depths false. Next, remember that perhaps every act of yours is proving the case against you. If you will not do by love the *absolving* work of the Corinthian Church, you may by severity do the terrible, condemning work of the same Church in darkening the light of hope and of God in the souls of the erring. If you represent God as more severe under the Chris-



tian than under the Jewish dispensation, or if you represent Him as the Father of a certain section in consideration of their faith, their church-membership, their baptism, or in consideration of *any thing*, except His own universal love; or if, chiming in with the false maxims of society, you pass proudly by the sinful and the wandering; then, so far as you have darkened the hope of any soul, though you may be saying loudly, "None can forgive but God;" yet, with a voice louder still, you will have demonstrated that, even if you will disclaim your power to loose, you can not part with your awful power to bind.

2. Inasmuch as St. Paul absolved, let us learn the true principle of ministerial absolution. Humanity is the representative of Deity. The Church is the representative of Humanity, the ideal of Humanity. The minister is the representative of the Church. When, therefore, the minister reads the absolution, he declares a fact. It does not depend on his character or his will. It is a true voice of man on earth echoing the voice of God in heaven. But if the minister forgets his representative character; if he forgets that it is simply in the name of Humanity and God, "in the person of Christ;" if by any mysterious language or priestly artifices he fixes men's attention on himself, or his office, as containing in it a supernatural power not shared by other men; then just so far he does not absolve or free the soul by declaring God. He binds it again by perplexed and awe-engendering falsehood, and so far is no priest at all; he has forfeited the priestly power of Christian humanity, and claimed instead the spurious power of the priesthood of superstition.

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## LECTURE XII.

1 CORINTHIANS v. 1-13. *November 30, 1851.*

THERE is but one subject in this chapter on which I shall address you to-day—I mean St. Paul's judgment on the scandal which had befallen the Corinthian Church. The same case was treated before you last Sunday. I took the Absolution first, that we might be prepared for a sentence of great severity, and that we should not think that sentence was final. The whole of this chapter is an eloquent, earnest appeal for judgment on the offender.

St. Paul's sentence was excommunication. "I have judged," he says, "to deliver such an one unto Satan." This is

the form of words used in excommunication. The presiding bishop used to say, formally, "I deliver such an one unto Satan." So that, in fact, St. Paul, when he said this, meant—My sentence is, "Let him be excommunicated."

Our subject, then, is Ecclesiastical Excommunication, or rather the grounds upon which human punishment rests. The first ground on which it rests is a representative one. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." There is used here, then, precisely the same formula as that in Absolution. "For your sakes forgave I it, in the person of Christ." In this place, "person" is a dramatic word. It means the character sustained on the stage by one who represents another. So then, absolving "in the person of Christ," excommunicating "in the name of Christ," implied that St. Paul did both in a representative capacity. Remember, then, man is the image of God, man is the medium through which God's absolution and God's punishment are given and inflicted. Man is the mediator, because he represents God.

If man, then, were a perfect image of God, his forgiveness and his condemnation would be a perfect echo of God's. But in respect of his partaking of a fallen nature, his acts, in this sense, are necessarily imperfect. There is but One, He in whom humanity was completely restored to the Divine image, Whose forgiveness and condemnation are exactly commensurate with God's. Nevertheless, the Church here is the representative of humanity, of that ideal man which Christ realized, and hence, in a representative capacity, it condemns and forgives.

Again, as such, that is as representative, human punishment is expressive of Divine indignation. Strong words are these: "To deliver unto Satan." Strong, too, are those: "Yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" And St. Paul approved that feeling. Now I can not explain such words away. I can not say the wrath of God is a *figurative* expression, nor dare I say the vengeance of the law is *figurative*, for it is a mistake to suppose that punishment is only to reform and warn. There is, unquestionably, another truth connected with it; it is the expression on earth of God's indignation in heaven against sin. St. Paul says of the civil magistrate, "For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Doubtless our human passions mingle with that word "vengeance." It is hard to use it and not conceive of some-

thing vindictive and passionate. Yet the Bible uses it, and when our hearts are sound and healthy, and our view of moral evil not morbid and sentimental, we feel it too. We feel that the anger of God is a reality, an awful reality, and that we dare not substitute any other expression. There can not be such a thing as perfect hatred of wrong and unmixed love of the wrong-doer. He who has done wrong has identified himself with wrong, and *so far* is an object of indignation. This, of course, in infinite degrees.

In our own day we are accustomed to use strange, weak words concerning sin and crime: we say, when a man does wrong, that he has mistaken the way to happiness, and that if a correct notion of real happiness could be given to men, crime would cease. We look on sin as residing, not in a guilty will, but in a mistaken understanding. Thus the Corinthians looked on at this deed of iniquity, and felt no indignation. They had some soft, feeble way of talking about it. They called it "mental disease," "error," "mistake of judgment," "irresistible passion," or I know not what.

St. Paul *did* feel indignation; and which was the higher nature, think you? If St. Paul had not been indignant, could he have been the man he was? And this is what we should feel; this it is which, firmly seated in our hearts, would correct our lax ways of viewing injustice and our lax account of sin.

Observe, the indignation of society is properly representative of the indignation of God. I tried last Sunday\* to show how the absolution of society looses a man from the weight of sin, by representing and making credible God's forgiveness—how it opens to him hope and the path to a new life. Now, similarly, see how the anger of society represents and makes credible God's wrath. So long as the Corinthians petted this sinner, conscience slumbered; but when the voice of men was raised in condemnation, and he felt himself everywhere shunned, conscience began to do its dreadful work, and then their anger became a type of coming doom. Remember, therefore, there is a real power lodged in humanity to bind as well as to loose; and remember that though Man, God's representative, may exercise this fearful power wrongly, too long, and too severely, in venial faults, yet there is still a power, a terrible human power, which may make outcasts, and drive men to infamy and ruin. Whosoever sins we bind on earth, they are bound. Only, therefore, so far as man is Christlike can he exercise this power in an entirely

\* This subject is also treated of in a sermon on "Absolution," which is published in the Third Series of Mr. Robertson's Sermons.

true and perfect manner. The world's excommunication or banishment is almost always unjust, and that of the nominal Church more or less so.

The second ground on which human punishment rests is the reformation of the offender. "That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Of all the grounds alleged for punishment, that of "an example to others" is the most heartless and the most unchristian. In Scripture I read of two principal objects of punishment: First, that which has been given already—punishment as an expression of righteous indignation; the other, the amelioration of the sinner, as is expressed in the above verse. And here the peculiarly merciful character of Christianity comes forth: the Church was never to give over the hope of recovering the fallen. Punishment, then, here is remedial. If St. Paul punished, it was "that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." And hence (putting capital punishment out of the present question) to shut the door of repentance upon any sin, to make outcasts forever, and thus to produce *despair*, is contrary to the idea of the Church of Christ, and alien from His Spirit. And so far as Society does that now, it is not christianized, for Christianity never sacrifices, as the world-system does, the individual to the society. Christianity has brought out strongly the worth of the single soul. Let us not, however, in treating of this subject, overstate the matter, for it would be too much to say that example is never a part of the object of punishment. Perhaps of the highest Christian idea of punishment it is not. Yet in societies, where, as the spirit of the old world still lingers, Christianity can never be fully carried out, it must be tolerated. For example, the army is a society which is incompatible with the existence of Christianity in its perfection. And here, too, we learn to look with an understanding eye at what else we must blame. When we censure the sanguinary laws of the past, we must remember that they did their work. And even now, the severe judgments and animadversions of society have their use. Christian they are not; worthy of a society calling itself Christian they are not: but as the system of a society only half Christian, such as ours, they have their expediency. Individuals are sacrificed, but society is kept comparatively pure, for many are deterred from wrong-doing by fear who would be deterred by no other motive.

The third ground is the contagious character of evil. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Observe, the evil was not a matter of example, but contagion. Such an one as this incestuous man—wicked, impenitent, and unpunished

—would infect the rest of the Church. Who does not know how the *tone* of evil has communicated itself? Worldly minds, irreverent minds, licentious minds, *leaven* society. You can not be long with persons who by innuendo, double meaning, or lax language, show an acquaintance with evil, without feeling in some degree assimilated to them, nor can you easily retain enthusiasm for right amongst those who detract and scoff at goodness. None but Christ could remain with the impenitent and be untainted; and even where repentance has been deeply felt, familiarity with some kinds of vice unfits a man for association with his fellow-men. A penitent man should be forgiven; but unless you can insure the removal of the mental taint, it does not follow that he is fit for safe intimacy. Perhaps never in this world again; and it may be part of his terrible discipline here, which we would fain hope is remedial, not penal, to retain the stamp of past guilt upon his character, causing him to be avoided, though forgiven.

The fourth ground was, Because to permit this would be to contradict the true idea of the Church of Christ, "Ye are unleavened." This is the idea of the Church of Christ, a body unleavened with evil; and St. Paul uses a metaphor taken from the Paschal Feast. It was eaten with unleavened bread, and every Jewish family scrupulously removed every crumb of leaven from the house before it began. In like manner, as that feast was eaten with no remnant of the old leaven, so is our Christian jubilee to be kept. All the old life has passed away. We may say, as St. Paul said of the Corinthians, "Ye are unleavened." A new start, as it were, has been given to you in Christ; you may begin afresh for life. Here, then, is the true conception of the Church: regenerated Humanity, new life without the leaven of old evil.

Let us distinguish, however, between the Church visible and invisible. The Church invisible is "the general assembly and Church of the first-born" spoken of in Hebrews xii. 23. It is that idea of humanity which exists in the mind of God: such as Paul described the Church at Ephesus; such as no Church ever really was; such as only Christ of men has ever been; but such as every Church is potentially and conceivably.\* But the Church visible is the actual men professing Christ, who exist in this age or in that; and the Church visible exists to represent, and at last to realize, the Church invisible. In the first of these senses, the apostle describes the Corinthian Church as "unleavened;" *i. e.*, he says,

\* See Mr. Robertson's Sermon on "The Victory of Faith" (Third Series).

that is the idea of your existence. In the second sense, he describes them as they are, "puffed up, contentious, carnal, walking as men." Now, for want of keeping these two things distinct, two grave errors may be committed.

1. Undue severity in the treatment of the lapsed.

2. Wrong purism in the matter of association with the world, its people, its business, and its amusements.

Into the first of these the Corinthians afterwards were tempted to fall, refusing reconciliation with the sinner. Into this the Church did fall for a period, in the third century, when Novatian, laying down the axiom that the actual state of the Church ought to correspond with its ideal—in fact, declaring that the Ideal of the Church was its actual state—very consistently with this false definition, demanded the non-restoration of all who had ever lapsed.

But the attempt to make the Church entirely pure must fail: it is to be left to a higher tribunal. Such an attempt ever has failed. The parable of the wheat and the tares makes it manifest that we can not eradicate evil from the Church without the danger of destroying good with it. Only, as a Church visible, she must separate from her all *visible* evil, she must sever from herself all such foreign elements as bear unmistakable marks of their alien birth. She is not the Church invisible, but she represents it. Her purity must be visible purity, not ideal; representative, not perfect.

The second error was a misconception, into which, from the apostle's own words, it was easy to fall; an over-rigorous purism, or puritanism. The Corinthians were to separate from the immoral; but in a world where all were immoral, how was this practicable? Should they buy no meat because the seller was a heathen? nor accept an invitation from him, nor transact business with him, because he was an idolater?

Against an extension of this principle he sedulously guards himself, in the ninth and tenth verses. St. Paul says to them, You are not to go out of the world, only take care that you do not recognize such sinners as *brothers*, by associating with them, or as fulfilling, in any degree, the Christian idea. Indeed, afterwards he tells them they were free to purchase meat which had been used in heathen sacrifices, and he contemplates the possibility of their accepting invitations to heathen entertainments.

Lastly, let us apply the principles we have now gained to practical life as at present existing; let us see the dangerous results of that exclusiveness which affects the society of the religious only.

The first result that follows is the habit of judging; for, if we only associate with those whom we think religious, we must decide who *are* religious, and this becomes a habit. Now for this judgment we have absolutely no materials. And the life of Christ, at least, should teach us that the so-called religious party are not always God's religious ones. The publicans and the harlots went into the kingdom of Heaven before the Pharisees.

And the second result is censoriousness; for we must judge who are *not* religious, and then the door is opened for the slander, and the gossip, and the cruel harshness, which make religious cliques worse even than worldly ones.

And the third result is spiritual pride; for we must judge *ourselves*, and so say to others, "I am holier than thou." And then we fall into the very fault of these Corinthians, who were rejoicing, not that they were Christians, but Christians of a peculiar sort, disciples of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. Had they been contented to feel that they had a common salvation—that they had been named by the same name, and redeemed by the same sacrifice—vanity had been impossible, for we are only vain of that wherein we *differ* from others. So we, too often rejoicing in thin distinctions—"they" and "we"—fall into that sin, almost the most hopeless of all sins—spiritual pride.

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### LECTURE XIII.

1 CORINTHIANS vi. 1-11. *December 7, 1851.*

THIS Epistle to the Corinthians differs from the other Epistles of St. Paul in this, that, instead of being one consecutive argument on connected subjects, it deals with a large variety of isolated questions, which the Corinthian Church had put to him on some previous occasion. Hence this Epistle is one of Christian Casuistry—an application of Christian principles to the various circumstances and cases of conscience which arise continually in the daily life of a highly civilized and highly artificial community. This chapter, the sixth, contains the apostle's judgment on two such questions:

- I. The manner of deciding Christian quarrels.
- II. The character of Christian liberty, what is meant by it, and how it is limited.

Of the first of these only I shall speak to-day, and the subject ranges from the first to the twelfth verse.

I. It appears from this account that questions arose among the Corinthian Christians which needed litigation: questions of wrongs done to persons or to property. Of the former of these we have already met one in the fifth chapter. These wrongs they carried to the heathen courts of judicature for redress. For this the apostle reproves them severely, and he assigns two reasons for his rebuke:

1. He desired a power in the Church to decide such difficulties for itself. These questions should be tried before "the saints"—that is, by Church judicature; and to support this opinion he reminds them that "the saints shall judge the world." Let us understand this phrase. Putting aside all speculations, we are all agreed on this, and we are drawn to a recollection of it by this Advent time, that this earth shall be one day a kingdom of God. We can not tell *how* it may be consummated, whether, as some think, by a miraculous and personal coming, or, as others hold, by the slow evolving, as ages pass, of Christian principles; by the gradual development of the mustard-seed into a tree, and of the leaven throughout the meal. But this unquestionably is true—human society *shall* be thoroughly Christianized. "The kingdoms of this world *shall* become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ." Legislation *shall* be Christian legislation. Law shall *not* then be a different thing from equity. And more, a time is coming when statute law shall cease, and self-government and self-control shall supersede all outward or arbitrary law. That will be the reign of the saints.

Let me then pause and examine the principles, as they are declared in Scripture, of this kingdom which is to be.

"The saints shall judge." The first principle, then, of the kingdom is the supremacy of goodness. It is by holiness that the earth shall be governed hereafter. For the word "judge" in this verse is used in the same sense as it is used of Deborah and Barak, and others who judged or ruled Israel. So here it does not mean that the saints shall be assessors with Christ at the day of judgment, but that they shall rule the world. Successively have force, hereditary right, talent, wealth, been the aristocracies of the earth. But then, in *that* kingdom to come, goodness shall be the only condition of supremacy. That is implied in this expression, "The saints shall judge."

The second principle is that the best shall rule. The Apostles "shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Now take that literally, and you have



nothing more than a cold, barren fact. You lose your time in investigating theories about thrones, and the restoration of the ten tribes, and the future superiority of the Jews. But take it in the spirit of the passage, and it means, and typically expresses, that in *that* kingdom the best shall rule.

The third principle is, that there each shall have his place according to his capacity. In 1 Cor. xii. 28, this is plainly laid down. Each man took his position in the Church of Christ, not according to his choice, but according to his charism or his gift. A man did not become a prophet, or a teacher, or an apostle, simply because it was his own desire, or because it was convenient for his parents so to bring him up, but because God had placed him there from his capacity for it. Observe, here was a new principle. Each man was to do that for which he was most fitted. So in the kingdom to come we shall not have the anomalies which now prevail. Men are ministers now who are fit only to plough; men are hidden now in professions where there is no scope for their powers; men who might be fit to hold the rod of empire are now weaving cloth. But it shall all be altered there. I do not presume to say *how* this is to be brought about. I only say the Bible declares it shall be so; and until it is so the kingdom of God is only *coming*, and not come. The Advent of the Saviour is yet to be expected.

These are the things that must be hereafter. And it is only in such a belief that human life becomes tolerable. For a time arrives when our own private schemes have failed, and for us there remains little to be either feared or hoped. At that time of life a man begins to cast his eyes on the weltering confusion of this world, its wrongs, its injustices, its cruel anomalies; and if it were not for a firm and deep conviction that there is a better future for the race, that the Son of God will come to the restitution of all things, who could suffer being here below?

But to return to the case before us. St. Paul argues, this is the future destiny of the Church. Are these principles, then, to be altogether in abeyance now? Is this Advent to be only a sickly dream without any connection with life, or is it not rather to be the shaping spirit of life? In the highest spiritual matters the Church shall decide hereafter. Therefore in questions now of earthly matters, such as in petty squabbles about property, the least esteemed Christian among you should be able to decide. "I speak to your shame;" where are your boasted Christian teachers? Can they not judge in a matter of paltry quarrel about property?

Let us not, however, mistake the apostle. Let us guard against a natural misconception of his meaning. You might think that St. Paul meant to say that the Corinthians should have ecclesiastical instead of civil courts; and for this reason, that Churchmen and clergy will decide rightly by a special promise of guidance, and heathen and laymen wrongly. But this has naught to do with the case under consideration. It is not a question here between ecclesiastical and civil courts, but between law and equity, between litigation and arbitration. No stigma is here affixed, or even implied, on the fairness of the heathen magistracy. The Roman government was most just and most impartial. St. Paul only means to say that law is one thing, equity another. The principles of heathen law were not Christian. Here we meet with the difficulty, then, how far Christianity deals with questions of property, politics, or those quarrels of daily life which require legal interference. A man asked Christ, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." And the Saviour refused to adjudicate: "Man, who made Me a ruler and a judge over you?" Yet *here* St. Paul requires the Christian Church to pronounce a judgment. The Redeemer seems to say, Christianity has nothing to do with deciding quarrels: let them be tried before the appointed judge. St. Paul seems to say, Christianity has every thing to do with it; go not before the magistrate. Contradictory as these two statements appear, there is no real opposition between them. Christ says, Not even the Lord of the Church has power as a *Judge* to decide questions about earthly property. St. Paul says, The Church has principles, according to which all such matters may be set at rest. And the difference between the worldly court of justice and the Christian court of arbitration is a difference, then, of diametrical opposition. Law says, You shall have your rights; the spirit of the true Church says, Defraud not your neighbor of *his* rights. Law says, You must not be wronged: the Church says, It is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong.

We can not, then, but understand that the difference is one of utter contrariety; for the spirit in the one case is, I will receive no wrong—in the other, I will scrupulously take care to do none. In application of this principle, the apostle says: "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another." As though he had said, That state of society is radically wrong in which matters between man and man must be decided by law. In such a state the remedy is, not more elaborate law, nor

cheaper law, nor greater facility of law, but more Christianity: less loud cries about "rights," more earnest anxiety on both and all sides to do no wrong. For this, you will observe, was in fact the apostle's ground: "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren." He leaves the whole question of arbitration *versus* law, and strikes at the root of the matter. "Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" Why so? Because to bear wrong, to endure—that is Christianity. Christ expressed this in proverbial form: "If a man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other." "If any man sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." And now consider: Is there, *can* there be any principle but this which shall at last heal the quarrels of the world? For while one party holds out as a matter of principle, the other appeals to law, and both are well assured of their own rights, what then must be the end? "If ye bite and devour one another," says St. Paul, "take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Whereas, if we were all Christianized, if we were all ready to bear and endure injuries, law would be needless—there would be no cry of "my rights, my rights." You will say, perhaps—But if we bear, we shall be wronged. You forget, I say, if *all* felt thus, if the spirit of *all* were endurance, there would be no wrong.

And so, at last, Christianity is finality. The world has no remedy for its miseries but the cure of its selfishness. The Cross of Christ, the spirit of that sacrifice, can alone be the regeneration of the world. The coming Revelation can only be a development of the last, as Christianity was of Judaism. There can be no *new* Revelation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Men have attempted to produce a peaceful and just state of society by force, by law, by schemes of socialism; and one after another all have failed—all must fail. There remains, then, nothing but the Cross of Christ, the Spirit of the life and death of Him who conquered the world by being the Victim of its sin.

2. The last reason given by the apostle in rebuking a litigious and quarrelsome disposition in the Corinthian Christians is that it contradicts the character of the kingdom of God, of which they were members. A true kingdom of Christ should be altogether free from persons of this charac-

ter. His argument runs thus: You ask me how quarrels are to be decided, except by law? how the oppressed are to be freed from gross oppressors, except by an appeal to legal justice? how flagrant crimes—such as that condemned in the fifth chapter—are to be prevented in Christians? I answer, the Church of Christ does not include *such* persons in the idea of its existence at all. It only contemplates the normal state; and this is the idea of the Church of Christ: men “washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” But drunkards, revilers, extortioners, covetous men, gross sensualists—I can not tell you how to legislate for such, for such ought not to be in your society at all. Regenerate thieves! regenerate libertines! regenerate extortioners! There is a horrible contradiction in the very thought; there is something radically wrong, when such men, remaining in their vices, are imagined as belonging to the true kingdom of God. This is what you *were* as heathens; this is not what you *are* to be as Christians.

And here you observe, as usual, that the apostle returns again to the great *idea* of the Church of God, the invisible Church, Humanity as it exists in the Divine mind; this is the standard he ever puts before them. He says, This you *are*. If you fall from this you contradict your nature. And now consider how opposite this, St. Paul’s way, is to the common way of insisting on man’s depravity. He insists on man’s dignity: he does not say to a man, You are fallen, you can not think a good thought, you are half beast, half devil, sin is alone to be expected of you, it is your nature to sin. But he says rather, It is your nature not to sin; you are not the child of the devil, but the child of God.

Brother men—between these two systems you must choose. One is the system of St. Paul and of the Church of England, whose baptismal service tells the child that he *is* a child of God—not that by faith or any thing else he can make himself such. The other is a system common enough amongst us, and well known to us, which begins by telling the child he is a child of the devil, to become *perhaps* the child of God. You must choose: you can not take both; will you begin from the foundation Adam or the foundation Christ? The one has in it nothing but what is debasing, discouraging, and resting satisfied with low attainments; the other holds within it all that is invigorating, elevating, and full of hope.

## LECTURE XIV.

1 CORINTHIANS vi. 12-20. *December 21, 1851.*

WE have divided this chapter into two branches, the first relating to the right method of deciding Christian quarrels. Our subject last Sunday was the sin of a litigious spirit, and this I endeavored to show in a twofold way: 1st. As opposed to the power lodged in the Christian Church to settle quarrels by arbitration on the principles of equity and charity, which are principles quite distinct from law; one being the anxiety to get, the other the desire to do right. And in assurance of this power being present with the Church then, St. Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians of the Advent day when it shall be complete—when “the saints shall judge the world.” For the advent of Jesus Christ—the kingdom of God—is but the complete development of powers and principles which are even now at work, changing and moulding the principles of the world. If hereafter the saints shall judge the world, “are ye unworthy now to judge the smallest matters?”

2d. The second point of view from which St. Paul regarded the sinfulness of this litigious spirit was the consideration of the idea of the Church of Christ. Christian quarrels! Disputes between Christian extortioners! The idea of the Church of God admits of no such thought—“Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the spirit of our God.”

I urged this as the apostolic mode of appeal—to men as redeemed, rather than to men as debased, fallen, reprobate. And I said further, that we must make our choice between these systems—the one that of modern sectarianism; the other that of St. Paul, and, as I believe, of the Church of England. We must start from the foundation of Adam’s fallen nature, or else from the foundation of Jesus Christ: we are either children of the devil or we are children of God. St. Paul says to all, “Ye are redeemed.”

To-day we are to consider another question, What are the limits of Christian rights? We can scarcely conceive that the religion of Jesus Christ could ever be thought to sanction sin and self-indulgence. But so it was. Men in the Corinth-

ian Church, having heard the apostle teach the law of liberty, pushed that doctrine so far as to make it mean a right to do whatsoever a man wills to do. Accordingly he found himself called on to oppose a system of self-indulgence and sensuality, a gratification of the appetites and the passions taught systematically as the highest Christianity. By these teachers self-gratification was maintained on the ground of two rights:

I. The rights of Christian liberty. "All things are lawful for me."

II. The rights of Nature. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats," and "God shall destroy both it and them."

I. The rights of Christian liberty. They stiffly stood on these. Their very watch-word was, "All things are lawful." It is easy to understand how this exaggeration came about. Men suddenly finding themselves freed from Jewish law with its thousand restrictions, naturally went very far in their new principles. For the first crude application of a theory either in politics or religion is always wild. They said, We may eat what we will. We are free from the observance of days. All things are lawful. That which is done by a child of God ceases to be sin. St. Paul met this exaggeration by declaring that Christian liberty is limited, first, by Christian expediency—"All things *are* lawful"—yes, "but all things are not expedient;" and, secondly, by its own nature—"All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

We will consider first the meaning of Christian expediency. It is that which is relatively best—the best attainable. There are two kinds of "best:" the "best" absolutely, and the "best" under present circumstances. It is absolutely best that war should cease throughout the world. Relatively it is best, under present circumstances, that a country should be ready to defend itself if attacked. A defensive fleet is expedient, and relatively best, but not the absolutely Christian best.

Now that which limits this liberty is, the profit of others. For example, in the northern part of these islands the observance of the Sabbath is much more rigorous than it is here. The best conceivable would be that all over Christendom the free high views of the Apostle Paul should be spread, the doctrine of the sanctification of all time. But so it is not yet. In the North, on Sunday, men will not sound an instrument of music, nor take a walk except to a place of worship. Now, suppose that an English Christian were to

find himself in some Highland village, what would be his duty? "All things are lawful for" him. By the law of Christian liberty he is freed from bondage to meats or drinks, to holidays or Sabbath days; but if his use of this Christian liberty should shock his brother Christians, or should become an excuse for the less conscientious among them to follow his example, *against* the dictates of their own conscience, then it would be his Christian duty to abridge his own liberty, because the use of it would be inexpedient.

The second limitation to this liberty arises out of its own nature. In that short sentence, "I will not be brought under the power of any," is contained one of the profoundest views of Christian liberty; I will try to elucidate it.

Christian liberty is internal. It resides in the deeps of the soul; a soul freed by faith is safe from superstition. He who fears God will fear nothing else. He who knows moral wrong to be the only evil will be free from the scrupulosities which torment others. It is that free self-determination which rules all things, which can enjoy or abstain at will. This spirit is expressed in "All things are yours, whether life or death, things present or things to come—all are yours."

Hence is clear what St. Paul so often says in his Epistles. This liberty can manifest itself under outward restrictions; for the spirit, exalted above all outward restrictions, no longer feels them to be restrictions. So if a Christian were in slavery, he was Christ's freedman—that is, he has a right to be free; but if by circumstances he is obliged to remain a slave, he is not troubled as if guilty of sin: he can wear a chain or not with equal spiritual freedom.

Now upon this the apostle makes this subtle and exquisitely fine remark: To be *forced* to use liberty is actually a surrender of liberty. If I turn "I may" into "I must," I am in bondage again. "All things are lawful to me." But if I say, Not only lawful, but I *must* use them, I am brought under their power.

For observe, there are two kinds of bondage. I am not free if I am under sentence of exile, and must leave my country. But also I am not free if I am under arrest, and must not leave it. So, too, if I think I must not touch meat on Friday, or that I must not read any but a religious book on a Sunday, I am in bondage. But again, if I am tormented with a scrupulous feeling that I did wrong in fasting, or if I feel that I must read secular books on Sunday to prove my freedom, then my liberty has become slavery again.

It is a blessed liberation to know that natural inclinations

are not necessarily sinful. But if I say, All natural and innocent inclinations *must* be obeyed at all times, then I enter into bondage once more. Christ proved to St. Peter that He was free from the necessity of paying tribute, the law being unjust as applied to Him. But had He felt himself bound by conscience not to pay it, He would not have been free. He paid the tribute, and thereby proved His liberty. For he alone is free who can use outward things with conscientious freedom as circumstances vary; who can take off restrictions from himself or submit to them, for good reasons; who can either do without a form or ritual, or can use it.

See, then, how rare as well as noble a thing is Christian liberty! Free from superstition, but free also from the rude, inconsiderate spirit which thinks there is no liberty where it is not loudly vindicated; free from the observance of rules, of rites, of ceremonies; free also from the popular prejudices which dare not use forms or observe days; and free from the vulgar outcry which is always protesting against the faith or practice of others.

II. The second plea of the teachers St. Paul is here condemning is, the rights of Nature. There is some difficulty in the exposition of this chapter, because the apostle mixes together the pleas of his opponents, with his own answers to those pleas—states them himself, in order that he may reply to them. The first part of the thirteenth verse contains two of these pleas; the second part of this verse, with the fourteenth, contains his reply. 1. “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats”—a natural correspondency. Here are appetites, and things made on purpose to satisfy appetites. “Therefore,” said they, “Nature herself says, ‘Enjoy!’” 2. The transitoriness of this enjoyment furnishes an argument for the enjoyment. “God shall bring to an end both it and them.” That is, the body will perish, so will the food and the enjoyments—they do not belong to eternity, therefore indulgence is a matter of indifference. It is foolish ignorance to think that these are sins, any more than the appetites of brutes which perish.

Now to these two pleas St. Paul makes two answers. To the argument about correspondency of appetites with the gratifications provided for them—an argument drawn from our nature to excuse gluttony and sensuality—he replies thus: “The body is not for self-indulgence, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” In other words, he tells of a more exact mutual correspondency. He reveals a true and higher nature.



Here, again, we see that St. Paul comes into collision with a common mode of teaching, which says man's nature is utterly vile and corrupt. These Corinthians said that, and St. Paul replied, No! that is a slander upon God. That is not your nature. Your true nature is, the body for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

There is much confusion and dispute about this word "nature," because it is rather ambiguous. Take an illustration. The nature of a watch is correspondence with the sun, perfect harmony of wheels and balance. But suppose that the regulator was removed, and the mainspring, unchecked, ran down, throwing all into confusion. Then two things might be said. One might say, It is the nature of that watch to err. But would it not be a higher truth to say, Its nature is to go rightly, and it is just because it has departed from its nature that it errs?

So speaks the apostle. To be governed by the springs of impulse only—your appetites and passions—this is not your nature. For the nature is the whole man; the passions are but a part of the man. And therefore our redemption from the lower life must consist, not in a perpetual assertion and dinning reiteration of our vileness, but in a reminder of what we are—what our true nature is.

To the other plea, the transitoriness of the body, he replies, You say the body will perish: "God shall bring it to an end." I say the body will not perish: "God hath raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His power." It is the outward form of the body alone which is transitory. Itself shall be renewed—a nobler, more glorious form, fitted for a higher and spiritual existence.

Now here, according to St. Paul, was the importance of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. He taught that the Life which proceeds from faith carries with it the germ of a higher futurity. It will pervade humanity to its full extent until body, soul, and spirit are presented blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus.

And hence, too, he drew an awful argument against sin. Some sins are committed without the body; sins of sensuality and animal indulgence are *against* the body. Our bodies, which are "members of Christ," to be ruled by His Spirit, become by such sins unfit for immortality with Christ. This is an awful truth. Sins committed against the body affect that wondrous tissue which we call the nervous system: the source of all our acutest suffering and intensest blessing is rendered so susceptible by God as to be at once our punishment or reward. Sin carries with it its own punishment.

There is not a sin of indulgence, gluttony, intemperance, or licentiousness of any form, which does not write its terrible retribution on our bodies.

Lax notions respecting self-indulgence are simply false: sinful pleasures are not trifles and indifferent. Irritability, many an hour of isolation, of dark and dreary hopelessness, is the natural result of powers unduly stimulated, unrighteously gratified.

In conclusion, it follows that nothing is really indifferent. In itself, perhaps, it may be; but under special circumstances duty always lies one way or the other, and nothing presents itself to us in our daily life simply in itself, as unconnected with other considerations.

And so Christian love makes all life one great duty.

## LECTURE XV.

1 CORINTHIANS vii. 10-24. *January 4, 1852.*

THE whole of this seventh chapter of the First Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians is occupied with some questions of Christian casuistry. In the application of the principles of Christianity to the varying circumstances of life, innumerable difficulties had arisen, and the Corinthians upon these difficulties had put certain questions to the Apostle Paul. We have here the apostle's answers to many of these questions. There are, however, two great divisions into which these answers generally fall. St. Paul makes a distinction between those things which he speaks by commandment and those which he speaks only by permission; there is a distinction between what he says as from the Lord, and what only from himself; between that which he speaks to them as being taught of God, and that which he speaks only as a servant, "called of the Lord and faithful."

It is manifestly plain that there are many questions in which *right* and *wrong* are not variable, but indissoluble and fixed; while there are questions, on the other hand, where these terms are not fixed, but variable, fluctuating, altering, dependent upon circumstances. As, for instance, those in which the apostle teaches in the present chapter the several duties and advantages of marriage and celibacy. There may be circumstances in which it is the duty of a Christian man to be married; there are others in which it may be his duty to remain unmarried. For instance, in the case of a mission-

ary it may be right to be married rather than unmarried; on the other hand, in the case of a pauper, not having the wherewithal to bring up and maintain a family, it may be proper to remain unmarried. You will observe, however, that no fixed law can be laid down upon this subject. We can not say marriage is a Christian duty, or celibacy is a Christian duty; nor that it is in every case the duty of a missionary to be married, or of a pauper to be unmarried. All these things must vary according to circumstances, and the duty must be stated not universally, but with reference to those circumstances.

These, therefore, are questions of casuistry, which depend upon the particular *case*; from which word the term "casuistry" is derived. On these points the apostle speaks, not by command, but by permission; not as speaking by God's command, but as having the Spirit of God. A distinction has sometimes been drawn, with reference to this chapter, between that which the apostle speaks by inspiration and what he speaks as a man uninspired. The distinction, however, is an altogether false one, and beside the question. For the real distinction is not between inspired and uninspired, but between a *decision* in matters of Christian duty and *advice* in matters of Christian prudence. It is abundantly evident that God can not give advice; he can only issue a command. God can not say, "It is better to do this;" His perfections demand something absolute: "Thou shalt *do* this; thou shalt *not* do this." Whensoever, therefore, we come to advice, there is introduced the human element rather than the divine. In all such cases, therefore, as are dependent upon circumstances, the apostle speaks not as inspired, but as uninspired; as one whose judgment we have no right to find fault with or to cavil at, who lays down what is a matter of Christian prudence, and not a bounden and universal duty. The matter of the present discourse will take in various verses in this chapter—from the tenth to the twenty-fourth verse—leaving part of the commencement and the conclusion for our consideration, if God permit, next Sunday.

There are three main questions on which the apostle here gives his inspired decision. The first decision is concerning the sanctity of the marriage-bond between two Christians. His verdict is given in the tenth verse: "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband." He lays down this principle, that the union is an indissoluble one. Upon such a subject, Christian brethren, before a mixed congregation, it is manifestly evident that we can only speak in general terms. It will be

sufficient to say that marriage is of all earthly unions almost the only one permitting of no change but that of death. It is that engagement in which man exerts his most awful and solemn power—the power of responsibility which belongs to him as one that shall give account—the power of abnegating the right to change—the power of parting with his freedom—the power of doing *that* which in this world can never be reversed. And yet it is perhaps that relationship which is spoken of most frivolously, and entered into most carelessly and most wantonly. It is not an union merely between two creatures, it is an union also between two spirits; and the intention of that bond is to perfect the nature of both, by supplementing their deficiencies with the force of contrast, giving to each sex those excellences in which it is naturally deficient; to the one strength of character and firmness of moral will; to the other sympathy, meekness, tenderness. And just so solemn and just so glorious as these ends are for which the union was contemplated and intended, just so terrible are the consequences if it be perverted and abused. For there is no earthly relationship which has so much power to ennoble and to exalt. Very strong language does the apostle use in this chapter respecting it: “What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt *save* thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” The very power of *saving* belongs to this relationship.

And on the other hand, there is no earthly relationship which has so much power to wreck and ruin the soul. For there are two rocks in this world of ours on which the soul must either anchor or be wrecked. The one is God; the other is the sex opposite to itself. The one is the “Rock of Ages,” on which if the human soul anchors it lives the blessed life of faith; against which if the soul be dashed and broken, there ensues the wreck of Atheism—the worst ruin of the soul. The other rock is of another character. Blessed is the man, blessed is the woman, whose life-experience has taught a confiding belief in the excellences of the sex opposite to their own—a blessedness second only to the blessedness of salvation. And the ruin in the other case is second only to the ruin of everlasting perdition—the same wreck and ruin of the soul. These, then, are the two tremendous alternatives: on the one hand, the possibility of securing, in all sympathy and tenderness, the laying of that step on which man rises towards his perfection; on the other hand, the blight of all sympathy, to be dragged down to earth, and forced to become frivolous and commonplace; to lose all zest and earnestness in life, to have heart and life de-

graded by mean and perpetually recurring sources of disagreement; these are the two alternatives: and it is the worst of these alternatives which the young risk when they form an inconsiderate union, excusably indeed—because through inexperience; and it is the worst of these alternatives which parents risk—not excusably, but inexcusably—when they bring up their children with no higher view of what that tie is than the merely prudential one of a rich and honorable marriage.

The second decision which the apostle makes respecting another of the questions proposed to him by the Corinthians is as to the sanctity of the marriage-bond between a Christian and one who is a heathen. When Christianity first entered into our world, and was little understood, it seemed to threaten the dislocation and alteration of all existing relationships. Many difficulties arose; such, for instance, as the one here started. When of two heathen parties only one was converted to Christianity, the question arose, What in this case is the duty of the Christian? Is not the duty separation? Is not the marriage in itself null and void, as if it were an union between one dead and one living? And that perpetual contact with a heathen, and therefore an enemy of God—is not that, in a relation so close and intimate, perpetual defilement? The apostle decides this with his usual inspired wisdom. He decides that the marriage-bond is sacred still. Diversities of religious opinion, even the farthest and widest diversity, can not sanction separation. And so he decides, in the 12th and 13th verses, “The woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.” And, “If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.” Now for us in the present day, the decision on this point is not of so much importance as the reason which is adduced in support of it. The proof which the apostle gives of the sanctity of the marriage is exceedingly remarkable. Practically it amounts to this: If this were no marriage, but an unhallowed alliance, it would follow as a necessary consequence that the offspring could not be reckoned in any sense as the children of God; but, on the other hand, it is the instinctive, unwavering conviction of every Christian parent, united though he or she may be to a heathen, “My child is a child of God,” or, in the Jewish form of expression, “My child is *clean*.” So the apostle says, “The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean: but now are they holy.”

For it follows, if the children are holy in the sense of dedicated to God, and are capable of Christian relationship, then the marriage relation was not unhallowed, but sacred and indissoluble. The value of this argument in the present day depends on its relation to baptism. The great question we are deciding in the present day may be reduced to a very few words. This question—the baptismal question—is this: Whether we are baptized because we *are* the children of God, or whether we are the children of God because we are *baptized*; whether, in other words, when the Catechism of the Church of England says that by baptism we are “made the children of God,” we are to understand thereby that we are made something which we were not before—magically and mysteriously changed, or whether we are to understand that we are made the children of God by baptism in the same sense that a sovereign is made a sovereign by coronation?

Here the the apostle’s argument is full, decisive, and unanswerable. He does not say that these children were Christian, or clean, because they were *baptized*, but they were the children of God because they were the children of one Christian parent; nay, more than that, such children could scarcely ever have been baptized, because, if the rite met with opposition from one of the parents, it would be an entire and perfect veto to the possibility of baptism. You will observe that the very fundamental idea out of which infant baptism arises is, that the impression produced upon the mind and character of the child by the Christian parent makes the child one of a Christian community; and, therefore, as Peter argued that Cornelius had received the Holy Ghost, and so was to be baptized, just in the same way as they are adopted into the Christian family, and receive a Christian impression, the children of Christian parents are also to be baptized.

Observe also the important truth which comes out collaterally from this argument—namely, the sacredness of the impression which arises from the close connection between parent and child. Stronger far than education—going on before education can commence, possibly from the very first moments of consciousness—is the impression we make on our children. Our character, voice, features, qualities—modified, no doubt, by entering into a new human being, and into a different organization—are impressed upon our children. Not merely the inculcation of opinions, but, much more, the formation of principles, of the tone of character, and the derivation of qualities. Physiologists tell us of the deriva-

tion of the mental qualities from the father, and of the moral from the mother. But, be this as it may, there is scarcely one here who can not trace back his present religious character to some impression, in early life, from one or other of his parents—it may be, from a tone, a look, a word, a habit, or even a bitter, miserable exclamation of remorse.

The third decision which the apostle gives, the third principle which he lays down, is but the development of the last. Christianity, he says, does not interfere with existing relationships. First, he lays down the principle, and then unfolds the principle in two ways, ecclesiastically and civilly. The principle he lays down in almost every variety of form. In the 17th verse: "As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk." In the 20th verse: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." In the 24th verse: "Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God." This is the principle. Christianity was not to interfere with existing relationships; Christian men were to remain in those relationships in which they were when called, and in them to develop the inward spirituality of the Christian life. Then he applies this principle in two ways. First of all, ecclesiastically. With respect to the Church, or ecclesiastical affairs, he says—"Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised." In other words, the Jews, after their conversion, were to continue Jews, if they would. Christianity required no change in these outward things, for it was not in *these* that the depth and reality of the kingdom of Christ consisted. So the Apostle Paul took Timothy and circumcised him; so, also, he used all the Jewish customs with which he was familiar, and performed a vow, as related in the Acts of the Apostles, "having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow." It was not his opinion that it was the duty of a Christian to overthrow the Jewish system. He knew that the Jewish system could not last, but what he wanted was to vitalize the system—to throw into it not a Jewish, but a Christian feeling; and so doing, he might continue in it so long as it would hold together. And so it was, no doubt, with all the other Apostles. We have no evidence that, before the destruction of the Jewish polity, there was any attempt made by them to overthrow the Jewish external religion. They kept the Jewish Sabbath, and observed the Jewish ritual. One of them, James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, though a Christian, was even among the Jews remarkable and honorable

for the regularity with which he observed all his Jewish duties. Now let us apply this to modern duties. The great desire among men now appears to be to alter institutions, to have perfect institutions, as if *they* would make perfect men. Mark the difference between this feeling and that of the apostle: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." We are called to be members of the Church of England—what is our duty now? What would St. Paul have done? Is this our duty—to put such questions to ourselves as these? "Is there any single, particular sentence in the service of my Church with which I do not entirely agree? Is there any single ceremony with which my whole soul does not go along? If so, then is it my duty to leave it at once?"

No, my brethren, all that we have to do is to say, "All our existing institutions are those under which God has placed us, under which we are to mould our lives according to His will." It is our duty to vitalize our forms, to throw into them a holier, deeper meaning. My Christian brethren, surely no man will get true rest, true repose for his soul in these days of controversy, until he has learned the deep significance of these wise words—"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." He will but gain unrest, he will but disquiet himself, if he says, "I am sinning by continuing in this imperfect system," if he considers it his duty to change his calling because his opinions do not agree in every particular and special point with the system under which God has placed him.

Lastly, the apostle applies this principle civilly. And you will observe he applies it to that civil relationship which, of all others, was the most difficult to harmonize with Christianity—slavery. "Art thou called," he says, "being a servant? Care not for it." Now in considering this part of the subject, we should carry along with us these two recollections: First, we should recollect that Christianity had made much way among this particular class, the class of slaves. No wonder the men cursed with slavery embraced with joy a religion which was perpetually teaching the worth and dignity of the human soul, and declaring that rich and poor, peer and peasant, master and slave, were equal in the sight of God. And yet, great as this growth was, it contained within it elements of danger. It was to be feared, lest men, hearing forever of brotherhood and Christian equality, should be tempted and excited to throw off the yoke by *force*, and compel their masters and oppressors to do them right.

The other fact we are to keep in remembrance is this—



that all this occurred in an age in which slavery had reached its worst and most fearful form, an age in which the emperors were accustomed, not unfrequently, to feed their fish with living slaves; when captives were led to fight in the amphitheatrè with wild beasts or with each other, to glut the Roman appetite for blood upon a Roman holiday. And yet, fearful as it was, the apostle says, "Care not for it." And fearful as war was in those days when the soldiers came to John to be baptized, he did not recommend them to join some "Peace Association," to use the modern term; he simply exhorted them to be content with their wages. And hence we understand the way in which Christianity was to work. It interferes indirectly, and not directly, with existing institutions. No doubt it will at length abolish war and slavery, but there is not one case where we find Christianity interfering with institutions as such. Even when Onesimus ran away and came to St. Paul, the apostle sent him back to his master Philemon, not dissolving the connection between them. And then, as a consolation to the servant, he told him of a higher feeling—a feeling that would make him free, with the chain and shackle upon his arm. And so it was possible for the Christian then, as it is now, to be possessed of the highest liberty even under tyranny. It many times occurred that Christian men found themselves placed under an unjust and tyrannical government, and compelled to pay unjust taxes. The Son of Man showed his freedom, not by refusing, but by paying them. His glorious liberty could do so without any feeling of degradation; obeying the laws, not because they were right, but because institutions are to be upheld with cordiality.

One thing more we have to observe. It is possible from all this to draw a most inaccurate conclusion. Some men have spoken of Christianity as if it were entirely indifferent about liberty and all public questions—as if with such things as these Christianity did not concern itself at all. This indifference is not to be found in the Apostle Paul. While he asserts that inward liberty is the only true liberty, he still goes on to say, "If thou mayest be made free, use it rather." For he well knew that although it was possible for a man to be a high and lofty Christian, even though he were a slave, yet it was not probable that he would be so. Outward institutions are necessary partly to make a perfect Christian character; and thus Christianity works from what is internal to what is external. It gave to the slave the feeling of his dignity as a man; at the same time, it gave to the Christian master a new view of his relation to his slave, and taught him to regard

him "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved." And so by degrees slavery passed into freed servitude, and freed servitude, under God's blessing, may pass into something higher. There are two mistakes which are often made upon this subject; one is, the error of supposing that outward institutions are unnecessary for the formation of character; and the other, that of supposing that they are *all* that is required to form the human soul. If we understand rightly the duty of a Christian man, it is this: to make his brethren free inwardly and outwardly; first inwardly, so that they may become masters of themselves, rulers of their passions, having the power of self-rule and self-control; and then outwardly, so that there may be every power and opportunity of developing the inward life; in the language of the prophet, "To break the rod of the oppressor, and let the oppressed go free."

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## LECTURE XVI.

1 CORINTHIANS vii. 29-31. *January 11, 1852.*

THIS was St. Paul's memorable decision, in reply to certain questions proposed to him by the Church of Corinth, on the subject of Unworldliness. Christianity was a new thing in the world, and circumstances daily arose in which it became a question in what way Christianity was to be applied to the circumstances of ordinary daily life.

Christ had said of His disciples, "They are not of the world." It was a question, therefore—Can a Christian lawfully enter the married state? Can he remain a slave and be a Christian too? May he make certain worldly compliances? Should a Christian wife remain with an unchristian husband? Here was the root of the difficult question—What is worldliness?

Now observe the large, broad spirit of the apostle's answer. In effect he says, You *may* do all this—you may enter into family relationships, and yet be living in expectation of Christ's coming. If you are a slave, care not for it. If any that believe not invite you to a feast, and you are disposed to go, go without fear. I can not judge for you; you must judge for yourselves. All that I lay down is, you must *in spirit* live above, and separate from, the love of earthly things.

Christianity is a spirit—it is a set of principles, and not a set of rules; it is not a mapping out of the chart of life, with

every shoal and rock marked, and the exact line of the ship's course laid down. It does not say, Do not go to this, or See that you abstain from that. It gives no definite rules for dress or for the expenditure of time or money. A principle is announced; but the application of that principle is left to each man's own conscience.

Herein Christianity differed essentially from Judaism. Judaism was the education of the spiritual child, Christianity that of the spiritual man. You must teach a child by rules; and, as he does not know the reason of them, his duty consists in implicit and exact obedience. But a man who is governed, not by principles, but by maxims and rules, is a pedant, or a slave; he will never be able to depart from the letter of the rule, not even to preserve the spirit of it. Here is one difference between the Law and the Gospel. The Law lays down rules—"Do this and live." The Gospel lays down principles. Thus Judaism said, Forgive seven times—exactly so much; Christianity said, Forgiveness is a boundless spirit—not three times, nor seven. No rule can be laid down but an infinite one—seventy times seven. It must be left to the heart.

So, too, the Law said—"On the Sabbath-day thou shalt do no manner of work." The *spirit* of this was rest for man, but Pharisaism kept literally to the *rule*. It would rather that a man should perish than that any work should be done, or any ground travelled over, on the Sabbath-day in saving him. Pharisaism regarded the *day* as mysterious and sacred; Christianity proclaimed the *day* to be nothing—the *spirit*, for which the day was set apart, every thing. It said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." It broke the day in the letter, whenever it was necessary, in the true spiritual observance of the day, to advantage the man.

Unworldliness, then, does not consist in giving up this or that; but in a certain inward principle. Had St. Paul been one of those ministers who love to be the autocrats of their congregations, who make their own limited conceptions the universal rule of right and wrong, he would have hailed this opportunity of deciding the question for them. But he walked in the light and liberty of the Gospel himself, and he desired that his converts should do the same.

This, then, is our subject:

- I. The motives for Christian unworldliness.
- II. The nature of that unworldliness.

The first motive is the shortness of time. "This I say,

brethren, the time is short." That mysterious word "time," which is a matter of sensation, dependent on the flight of ideas, may be long to one person and short to another. The span of life granted to a summer butterfly is long compared with that granted to the ephemeron; it is short compared with the duration of a cedar of Lebanon. Relative to experience, an hour is long to a child, yet a year is little to a man. Shortness, therefore, is a term entirely relative to something else.

1. It is relative to the way in which we look on Time, whether it be regarded from before or after. Time past is a dream, time to come seems immense; the longest night, which seemed as if it would never drag through, is but a speck of memory when it is gone. At sixty-five, a man has on an average five years to live; yet his imagination obstinately attaches solidity and stability to those five coming years, though the sixty-five seem but a moment. To the young such words as these are often perfectly unmeaning: life to them is an inexhaustible treasure. But ask the old man what he thinks of the time he has had; he *feels*, what the young can scarcely be brought to believe, that time future may seem long, but time past is as nothing. Years glide swiftly, though hours and minutes scarcely seem to move.

2. Time is short in relation to opportunities. Literally these words mean—"The opportunity is compressed, narrowed"—that is, every season has its own opportunity, which never comes back. A chance once gone is lost forever. The autumn sun shines as brightly as that of spring, but the seed of spring can not be sown in autumn. The work of boyhood can not be done in manhood. Time is short—it is opportunity narrowed in!

The chance will not be given you long. Have you learnt the lesson of yesterday? or the infinite meaning of to-day? It has duties of its own; they can not be left until to-morrow. To-morrow will bring its own work. There is a solemn feeling in beginning any new work; in the thought, I have begun this to-day, shall I ever complete it? And a voice says, "Work on, for the day of its closing is unknown." The true consciousness of this life is as a tombstone, on which two dates are to be inscribed: the day of birth is engraven at full length, while a blank is left for the day of death. Born on such a day; died —? The time in which that blank has to be filled up is short.

The great idea brought out by Christianity was the eternity of the soul's life. With this idea the Corinthian Church

was then struggling. So vast, so absorbing was this idea to them, that there was ground for fear lest it should absorb all considerations of the daily life and duties which surrounded these converts. The thought arose—"Oh! in comparison of that great Hereafter, this little life shrivels into nothingness! Is it worth while to attempt to do any thing? What does it concern us to marry, to work, to rejoice, or to weep?"

All deep minds have felt this at some period or other of their career—all earnest souls have had this temptation presented to them in some form or other. It has come, perhaps, when we were watching underneath the quiet, gliding heavens, or perhaps when the ticking of a clock in restless midnight hours made us realize the thought that time was speeding on forever—for this life beating out fast. That strange, awful thing, Time! sliding, gliding, fleeting on—on to the cataract; and then the deep, deep plunge down, bearing with it and swallowing up the world and the ages, until every interest that now seems so great and absorbing is as a straw on the mighty bosom of a flood. Let but a man possess his soul with this idea of Time, and then unworldliness will be the native atmosphere he breathes.

The second motive given is the changefulness of the external world: "The fashion of this world passeth away." It may be needful here to remark, that the word "fashion" has not here the popular meaning which has been generally assigned to it. It does not refer to those customs and conventionalities which vary in different nations and different ages; all these pass away: but the word refers here to all that is external upon earth; all that has form, and shape, and scenery; all that is visible, in contradistinction to that which is invisible.

The transitoriness of this world might have been purely a matter of revelation. Instead of gradual and visible decay, God might have arranged his cycles so that change should not have been perceptible within the limits of a lifetime; that dissolution should have come on things suddenly, instead of by slow and gradual steps. Instead of that, He has mercifully chosen that it should not only be a matter of revelation, but of observation also. This visible world is only a form and an appearance. God has written decay on all around us. On the hills, which are everlasting only in poetry; their outlines changing within the memory of man. On the sea-coast, fringed with shingle. Look at it receding from our white cliffs; its boundaries are not what they were. This law is engraven on our own frames. Even in the infant the progress of dissolution has visibly begun. The principle of

development is at work, and development is but the necessary step towards decay. There is a Force at work in every thing, call it what you will—Life or Death: it is reproduction out of decay. The outward form is in a perpetual flux and change.

We stand amidst the ruins of other days, and as they moulder before our eyes they tell us of generations which have mouldered before them, and of nations which have crossed the theatre of life and have disappeared. We join in the gladness of the baptism, and the years roll on so rapidly that we are almost startled to find ourselves standing at the wedding. But pass on a few years more, and the young heart for which there was so much gladness in the future has had its springs dried up. He belongs to a generation which has passed, and they among whom he lingers feel as if he had lived too long. And then he drops silently into the grave to make way for others. One of our deepest thinkers—a man of profoundest observation, who thought by means of a boundless heart—has told us, in words trite and familiar to us all,

“ All the world’s a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players :  
They have their exits and their entrances ;  
And one man in his time plays many parts.”

Let us look at our own neighborhood. Those with whom we walked in youth are gone, and scattered we know not where, and others have filled their places. We are developing every day new relationships: every day new circumstances are occurring which call upon us to act promptly, manfully, equal to the occasion; for the past is gone.

Therefore, strive to be unworldly. Be not buried in the present. To-day becomes yesterday so fast. Mourn not over what will so soon be irreparably gone. There is nothing worth it.

Again, that “ fashion of the world ” passes away *in us*. Our very minds change—not merely the objects which make the impression on them. The impressions themselves are fleeting. All except the perpetually repeated sensations of eternity, space, time; all else alters. There is no affliction so sharp, no joy so bright, no shock so severe, but Time modifies and cures all. The keenest feeling in this world is not eternal. If it remains, it is in an altered form. Our memories are like monumental brasses: the deepest graven inscription becomes at last illegible. Of such a world the apostle seems to ask, Is this a world for an immortal being to waste itself upon?

## II. The nature of Christian unworldliness.

Two points are contained in this last verse: 1st. The spirit or principle of unworldliness; to use this world as not abusing it. 2d. The application of that principle to four cases of life. Domestic relations—"They that have wives be as though they had none." Joy—"They that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." Sorrow—"They that weep, as though they wept not." The acquisition of property—"They that buy, as though they possessed not."

The principle is, to "use this world as not abusing it." Here Christianity stands between the worldly spirit and the narrow religious spirit. The worldly spirit says, "Time is short; take your fill; live while you can." The narrow religious spirit says, "All the pleasure here is a snare, and dangerous; keep out of it altogether." In opposition to this narrow spirit, Christianity says, "Use the world," and, in opposition to the worldly spirit, "Do not abuse it. All things are yours. Take them and use them; but never let them interfere with the higher life which you are called on to lead. 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.'"

It is therefore a distinct duty to use life while we are here. We are citizens of the world, we may not shrink from it. We must share its duties, dangers, sorrows, and joys. Time is short; therefore opportunities are so much the more valuable. There is an infinite value stamped upon them. Therefore use the world. But then it is a duty equally distinct, to live above the world. Unworldliness is the spirit of holding all things as not our own, in the perpetual conviction that they will not last. It is not to put life and God's lovely world aside with self-torturing hand. It is to have the world, and not to let the world have you; to be its master, and not its slave. To have Christ hidden in the heart, calming all, and making all else seem by comparison poor and small.

This principle he applies, first, to domestic life. "They that have wives be as though they had none."

The idea was just then beginning to be discussed, which of the two was in itself the higher state, and more according to God's will, the single or the married? In after ages this question was decided in a very disastrous way; for it was taught that celibacy was the only really pure and angelic life. Marriage was regarded as earthly and sensual, unfit for those who were to serve as priests. Now here observe the apostolic wisdom. He does not say celibacy is the saintly, and marriage the lower and earthlier state. He wisely

says, "In whatever state you can most undistractedly serve God, that is the unworldly one to you."

This is a very important principle for consideration in the present day. There is a growing tendency to look on a life of contemplation and retirement, of separation from all earthly ties—in a word, asceticism—as the higher life. Let us understand that God has so made man, that ordinarily he who lives alone leaves part of his *heart* uncultivated; for God made man for domestic life. He who would be wiser than his Maker is only wise in appearance. He who cultivates one part of his nature at the expense of the rest has not produced a perfect man, but an exaggeration. It is easy, in silence and solitude, for the hermit to be abstracted from all human interests and hopes, to be dead to honor, dead to pleasure. But, then, the sympathies which make him a man with men—how shall they grow? He is not the highest Christian who lives alone and single, but he who, whether single or married, lives superior to this earth; he who, in the midst of domestic cares, petty annoyances, or daily vexations, can still be calm, and serene, and sweet. That is real unworldliness; and, in comparison with this, the mere hermit's life is easy indeed.

The second case is unworldliness in sorrow. "They that weep, as though they wept not." Observe, the apostle does not here recommend apathy, nor merely a reason of prudence. He bids them sorrow; but not as they who have no hope. He does not say, "Weep not;" but "Weep, as though they wept not."

This unworldliness consists of two parts:

1. The duty and the right of sorrow. "Weep." Christianity does not sear the human heart; it softens it. They who forbid grief should, to be consistent, go further, and forbid affection, for grief is only a state of the affections; if joy be felt in the presence of the loved object, grief must be felt in its absence. Christianity destroys selfishness, makes a man quick and sensitive for others, and alive to every call of affection. Moreover, dealing with infinite things, it imparts something of its own infinitude to every feeling. A Christian is a man whose heart is exquisitely attuned to all utterances of grief. Shall *he* not feel or mourn? His Master wept over the grave of friendship. Tears of patriotism fell from His eyes. There is no unmanliness in shedding tears; it is not unchristian to yield to deep feeling. We may admire the stern old Roman heart; but we must not forget that the Roman stoicism is not of the spirit of Christianity. For Christianity says, "Weep."



2. Christian unworldliness puts limits to sorrow. "As though they wept not;" that is, as though God had already removed their grief. Else, in this world of sorrow and distress, how should we escape despair? Familiarity with eternal things subdues grief, calms and softens it, gives it a true perspective. Christianity does not say to our hearts, when smarting under the bitter pain of disappointment or loss, "It is nothing!" but it says, "It is less than you had supposed it to be; you will, sooner or later, feel that it is easier to bear than you expected." This elasticity of heart receives its only true warrant from Christianity. Have you lost a dear relative? Well, you may weep; but even while weeping, Christ comes to you and says, "Thy brother shall rise again."

The third case is unworldliness in joy. "They that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." Christ's religion is no grim, ghastly system of gloom. God's world is not like the fabled place of punishment where waters of refreshment rise brimming to the lips, while a stern prohibition sounds forth, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." You will observe, the joy spoken of here is not spiritual, but earthly joy; for, if it had been spiritual joy, the apostle could not have put any limitation to it. Therefore Christians *may* have earthly joy. And they that rejoice are emphatically the young. Let the young be happy. Health, spirits, youth, society, accomplishments—let them enjoy these, and thank God with no misgiving. Let there be no half-remorseful sensations, as though they were stolen joys. Christ had no sympathy with that tone of mind which scowls on human happiness: His first manifestation of power was at a marriage feast. Who would check the swallow's flight, or silence the gush of happy melody which the thrush pours forth in spring?

Look round this beautiful world of God's ocean dimpled into myriad smiles; the sky a trembling, quivering mass of blue, thrilling hearts with ecstasy; every tint, every form, replete with beauty. You can not, except willfully, misread its meaning. God says, "Be glad!" Do not force young, happy hearts to an unnatural solemnity, as if to be happy were a crime. Let us hear their loud, merry, ringing laugh, even if sterner hearts can be glad no longer; to see innocent mirth and joy does the heart good.

But now observe, everlasting considerations are to come in, not to sadden joy, but to calm it, to moderate its transports, and make even worldly joy a sublime thing. We are to be calm, cheerful, self-possessed; to sit loose to all these sources of enjoyment, masters of ourselves.

The apostle lays down no rule respecting worldly amusements. He does not say, You must avoid this or that, but he lays down broad principles. People often come to ministers and ask them to draw a boundary line within which they may safely walk. There is none. It is at our peril that we attempt to define where God has not defined. We can not say, "This amusement is right, and that is wrong." And herein is the greater responsibility laid upon all, for we have to live out principles rather than maxims; and the principle here is, be unworldly.

But remember, if the enjoyments which you permit yourselves are such, that the thought of passing Time and coming Eternity presents itself as an intrusive thought, which has no business there, which is out of place, and incongruous; if you become secularized, excited, and artificial; if there is left behind a craving for excitement which can only be slaked by more and more intense excitement: then it is at your own peril that you say, All is left open to me, and permitted. Unworldly you *must* become—or die. Dare not to say, This is only a matter of opinion: it is *not* a matter of opinion; it is a matter of conscience; and to God you must give account for the way in which you have been dealing with your soul.

The fourth case is unworldliness in the acquisition of property. "They that buy, as though they possessed not."

Unworldliness is not measured by *what* you possess, but by the spirit in which you possess it. It is not said, "Do not buy," but rather "Buy—possess." You may be a large merchant, an extensive landed proprietor, a thriving tradesman, if only your heart be separate from the *love* of these earthly things, with God's love *paramount* within. The amount of property you possess does not affect the question; it is purely a relative consideration. You go into a regal or ducal palace, and perhaps, unaccustomed to the splendor which you see, you say, "All this is worldliness." But the poor man comes to your house; your dress, simple as it is, seems magnificent to him; your day's expenditure would keep his family for half a year. He sees round him expensively bound books, costly furniture, pictures, silver, and china—a profusion certainly beyond what is absolutely necessary; and to him this seems worldliness too. If the monarch is to live as you live, why should not you live as the laborer lives? If what you call the necessaries of life be the measure of the rich man's worldliness, why should not the poor man's test gauge yours?

No! we must take another test than property as the meas-

ure of worldliness. Christianity forbids our condemning others; men *may* buy and possess. Christianity prescribes no law for dress, its color, its fashion, or its cost; none for expenditure, none for possessions: it fixes great principles, and requires you to be unaffected, unenslaved by earthly things; to possess them as though you possessed them not. The Christian is one who, if a shipwreck or a fire were to take all luxury away, could descend, without being crushed, into the vallies of existence. He wears all this on the outside, carelessly, and could say, "My *all* was not laid there."

In conclusion, let there be no censoriousness. How others live, and what they permit themselves, may be a matter for Christian charity, but it is no matter for Christian severity. To his own master each must stand or fall. Judge not. It is work enough for any one of us to save his own soul.

Let there be no self-deception. The way in which I have expounded this subject gives large latitude, and any one may abuse it if he will—any one may take comfort to himself, and say, "Thank God, there are no hard restrictions in Christianity." Remember, however, that worldliness is a more decisive test of a man's spiritual state than even sin. Sin may be sudden, the result of temptation, without premeditation, yet afterwards hated—repented of—repudiated—forsaken. But if a man *be at home* in the world's pleasure and pursuits, content that his spirit should have no other heaven but in these things, happy if they could but last forever, is not his state, genealogy, and character clearly stamped?

Therefore does St. John draw the distinction—"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father;" but "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

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## LECTURE XVII.

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR KNOWLEDGE.

1 CORINTHIANS viii. 1-7. *January 18, 1852.*

THE particular occasion of this chapter was a controversy going on in the Church of Corinth respecting a Christian's right to eat meat which had been sacrificed to idols. Now the question was this: It was customary, when an animal was sacrificed or consecrated to a heathen god, to reserve one

portion for the priest and another for the worshipper. These were either used in the feasts or sold like common meat in the shambles. Now among the Corinthian converts some had been Jews and some heathens: those who had been Jews would naturally shrink from eating this meat, their previous training being so strongly opposed to idolatry, while those who had been heathen would be still more apt to shrink from the use of this meat than were the Jews; for it is proverbial that none are so bitter against a system as those who have left it, perhaps for the simple reason that none know so well as they the errors of the system they have left. There was another reason which made the heathen converts shrink from eating this meat, and this was, that they were unable to divest themselves of the idea that the deities they had once adored were living entities; they had ceased to bow before them, but long habit had made them seem living personalities; they looked on them as demons. Hence the meat of an animal consecrated while living to an idol appeared to them polluted, accursed, contaminated—a thing only fit to be burnt, and utterly unfit for food.

This state of feeling may be illustrated by the modern state of belief with reference to apparitions. Science has banished an express faith in their existence, yet we should probably be surprised did we know how much credulity on this subject still remains. The statute book is purged from the sentences on witchcraft, and yet a lingering feeling remains that it may still exist in power. Christianity had done the same for the heathen deities. They were dethroned as gods, but they still existed to the imagination as beings of a lower order—as demons who were malicious to men and enemies to God. Hence, meat offered to them was regarded as abominable, as unfit for a Christian man to eat; he was said to have compromised his Christianity by doing so. On the other hand, there were men of clearer views who maintained, in the language quoted by St. Paul, “An idol is nothing in the world”—a nonentity, a name, a phantom of the imagination; it can not pollute the meat, since it is nothing, and has no reality. Therefore they derided the scruple of the weaker brethren, and said, “We will eat.” Now all this gave rise to the enunciation of a great principle by the Apostle Paul. In laying it down, he draws a sharp distinction between Secular and Christian knowledge, and also unfolds the law of Christian conscience.

It is to the first of these that I shall claim your attention to-day.

A great controversy is going on at the present time in the

matter of education. One partly extols the value of instruction, the other insists loudly that secular education without religion is worse than useless. By secular education is meant instruction in such branches as arithmetic, geography, grammar, and history; and by religious education, instruction in the Bible and the catechism. But you will see at once that the knowledge of which St. Paul spoke slightly was much higher than any or all of these. He spoke of instruction not merely in history, geography, or grammar, but also of instruction in the Bible, the catechism, and the Articles, as worthless, without training in humility and charity. This was the secular knowledge he speaks of, for you will perceive that he treats knowledge of very important religious matters as secular, and rates it very low indeed. He said, Mere knowledge is worth little; but then by knowledge he meant not merely knowledge without Christian doctrine, but knowledge without love.

Many a person now zealous on this point of education would be content if only the Bible, without note or comment, were taught. But St. Paul would not have been content; he would have calmly looked on and said, This also is secular knowledge. This, too, is the knowledge which puffeth up; but Christian knowledge is the charity which alone buildeth up a heavenly spirit. Let me try to describe more fully this secular knowledge.

It is knowledge without humility. For it is not so much the department of knowledge, as it is the spirit in which it is acquired which makes the difference between secular and Christian knowledge. It is not so much the thing known as the way of knowing it. "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." "As he ought to know." That single word "as" is the point of the sentence; for it is not *what* to know, but *how* to know, which includes all real knowledge.

The greatest of modern philosophers, and the greatest of modern historians, Humboldt and Niebuhr, were both eminently humble men. So, too, you will find that *real* talent among mechanics is generally united to great humility. Whereas the persons you would select as puffed up by knowledge are those who have a few religious maxims and a few shallow religious doctrines. There are two ways, therefore, of knowing all things. One is that of the man who loves to calculate how far he is advanced beyond others; the other that of the man who feels how infinite knowledge is, how little he knows, and how deep the darkness of those who know even less than he; who says, not as a cant phrase, but in un-

affected sincerity, "I know nothing, and do go into the grave." That knowledge will never puff up.

Again, it is liberty without reverence. These men to whom the apostle writes in rebuke were free from many superstitions. An idol, they said, was nothing in the world. But although freed from the worship of false gods, they had not *therefore* adored the true God. For it is not merely freedom from superstition which is worship of God, but it is loving dependence on Him; the surrender of self. "If any man love God, the same is known of Him." Observe, it is not said, "He shall know God," but "shall be known of Him;" that is, God shall acknowledge the likeness and the identity of spirit, and "will come unto him and make His abode with him."

There is much of the spirit of these Corinthians existing now. Men throw off what they call the trammels of education, false systems, and superstitions, and then call themselves free: they think it a grand thing to reverence nothing; all seems to them either kingcraft or priestcraft, and to some it is a matter of rejoicing that they have nothing left either to respect or worship. There is a recent work in which the writer has tried to overthrow belief in God, the soul, and immortality, and proclaims this liberty as if it were a gospel for the race! My brother-men, this is not high knowledge. It is a great thing to be free from mental slavery, but suppose you are still a slave to your passions? It is a great thing to be emancipated from superstition, but suppose you have no religion? From all these bonds of the spirit Christianity has freed us, says St. Paul; but then it has not left us merely free from these, it has bound us to God. "Though there be gods many, yet to us there is but one God." The true freedom from superstition is free service to religion: the real emancipation from false gods is reverence for the true God. For high knowledge is not negative, but positive; it is to be freed from the fear of the many in order to adore and love the one. And not merely is this the only real knowledge, but no other knowledge "buildeth up" the soul. It is all well so long as elasticity of youth and health remain. Then the pride of intellect sustains us strongly; but a time comes when we feel terribly that the Tree of Knowledge is not the Tree of Life. Our souls without God and Christ enter deeper and deeper into the hollowness and darkness, the coldness and the death, of a spirit separate from love. "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Separate from love, the more we know, the profounder the mystery of life becomes; the more dreary and the more horrible becomes ex-

istence. I can conceive no dying hour more awful than that of one who has aspired to *know* instead of to *love*, and finds himself at last amidst a world of barren facts and lifeless theories, loving none and adoring nothing.

Again, it is comprehension, without love to man.

You will observe these Corinthians had got a most clear conception of what Christianity was. "An idol," said they, "is nothing in the world." There is none other God but One, and there is "but one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." Well, said the Apostle Paul, and what signifies your profession of that, if you look down with supreme contempt on your ignorant brothers, who can not reach to these sublime contemplations? What reality is there in your religion, if you look at men struggling in darkness, and are content to congratulate yourselves that you are in the light? When heathen, they had loved these men; now that they were Christians, they despised them! Was their Christianity then gain or loss? Did they rise in the scale of manhood or fall? "Slaves, idolaters, superstitious;" alas! is that all they or we have learned to say? Is that all our Christianity has given us?

Some of us have been taught that knowledge such as *this* is not advance, but retrogression. We have looked on our shelves laden with theology or philosophy, and have enumerated the systems which have been mastered; and we have felt how immeasurably superior in the sight of God is some benighted Romanist, who believes in transubstantiation and purgatory, but who has gone about doing good, or some ignorant, narrow religionist, who has sacrificed time and property to Christ, to the most correct theologian in whose heart there is no love for his fellow-men. For breadth of view is not breadth of heart; and hence the substance of Christianity is love to God and love to man. Hence, too, the last of the Apostles, when too weak to walk to the assemblies of the Church, was borne there, a feeble old man, by his disciples, and, addressing the people as he spread abroad his hands, repeated again and again—"Love one another;" and when asked why he said ever the same thing, replied, "Because there is nothing else: attain that, and you have enough." Hence, too, it is a precious fact that St. Paul, the apostle of liberty, whose burning intellect expounded the whole philosophy of Christianity, should have been the one to say that knowledge is nothing compared to charity, nay, worse than nothing without it: should have been the one to declare that "Knowledge shall vanish away, but love never faileth."

## LECTURE XVIII.

1 CORINTHIANS viii. 8-13. *January 25, 1852.*

WE have already divided this chapter into two branches—the former portion of it containing the difference between Christian knowledge and secular knowledge, and the second portion containing the apostolic exposition of the law of Christian conscience. The first of these we endeavored to expound last Sunday, but it may be well briefly to recapitulate the principles of that discourse in a somewhat different form. Corinth, as we all know and remember, was a city built on the sea-coast, having a large and free communication with all foreign nations; and there was also within it, and going on amongst its inhabitants, a free interchange of thought, and a vivid power of communicating the philosophy and truths of those days to each other. Now it is plain that to a society in such a state, and to minds so educated, the Gospel of Christ must have presented a peculiar attraction, presenting itself to them as it did, as a law of Christian liberty. And so in Corinth the Gospel had “free course and was glorified,” and was received with great joy by almost all men, and by minds of all classes and all sects; and a large number of these attached themselves to the teaching of the Apostle Paul as the most accredited expounder of Christianity—the “royal law of liberty.” But it seems, from what we read in this Epistle, that a large number of these men received Christianity as a thing intellectual, and that alone—and not as a thing which touched the conscience, and swayed and purified the affections. And so this liberty became to them almost *all*—they ran into sin or went to extravagance—they rejoiced in their freedom from the superstitions, the ignorances, and the scruples which bound their weaker brethren; but had no charity—none of that intense charity which characterized the Apostle Paul—for those still struggling in the delusions and darkness from which they themselves were free.

More than that, they demanded their right, their Christian liberty of expressing their opinions in the church, merely for the sake of *exhibiting* the Christian graces and spiritual gifts which had been showered upon them so largely; until by



degrees those very assemblies became a lamentable exhibition of their own depravity, and led to numerous irregularities which we find severely rebuked by the Apostle Paul. Their women, rejoicing in the emancipation which had been given to the Christian community, laid aside the old habits of attire which had been consecrated so long by Grecian and Jewish custom, and appeared with their heads uncovered in the Christian community. Still further than that, the Lord's Supper exhibited an absence of all solemnity, and seemed more a meeting for licentious gratification, where "one was hungry, and another was drunken"—a place in which drunkenness, and the enjoyment of the earthly appetites, had taken the place of Christian charity towards each other.

And the same feeling—this love of mere liberty—liberty in itself—manifested itself in many other directions. Holding by this freedom, their philosophy taught that the body, that is, the flesh, was the only cause of sin; that the soul was holy and pure; and that, therefore, to be free from the body would be entire, perfect, Christian emancipation. And so came in that strange, wrong doctrine, exhibited in Corinth, where immortality was taught separate from and in opposition to the doctrine of the Resurrection. Afterwards they went on with their conclusions about liberty—to maintain that the body, justified by the sacrifice of Christ, was no longer capable of sin; and that in the evil which was done by the body the soul had taken no part, therefore sin was to them but as a name, from which a Christian conscience was to be freed altogether. So that when one of their number had fallen into grievous sin, and had committed licentiousness, "such as was not so much as named among the Gentiles," so far from being humbled by it, they were "puffed up," as if they were exhibiting to the world an enlightened, true, perfect Christianity—separate from all prejudices.

To such a society and to such a state of mind the Apostle Paul preached, in all their length, breadth, and fullness, the humbling doctrines of the Cross of Christ. He taught that knowledge was one thing—that charity was *another* thing; that "knowledge puffeth up, but charity buildeth up." He reminded them that love was the perfection of knowledge. In other words, his teaching came to this: there are two kinds of knowledge; the one the knowledge of the intellect, the other the knowledge of the heart. Intellectually, God never can be known; He must be known by love—for, "if any man love God, the same is known of Him." Here, then, we have arrived, in another way, at precisely the same conclusion at which we arrived last Sunday. Here are two

kinds of knowledge, secular knowledge and Christian knowledge; and Christian knowledge is this—to know by loving.

Let us now consider the remainder of the chapter, which treats of the law of Christian conscience. You will observe that it divides itself into two branches—the first containing an exposition of the law itself, and the second the Christian applications which flow out of this exposition.

1. The way in which the apostle expounds the law of Christian conscience is this: Guilt is contracted by the soul, in so far as it sins against and transgresses the law of God, by doing that which it believes to be wrong: not so much what *is* wrong, as what *appears* to it to be wrong. This is the doctrine distinctly laid down in the 7th and 8th verses. The apostle tells the Corinthians—these strong-minded Corinthians—that the superstitions of their weaker brethren were unquestionably wrong. “Meat,” he says, “commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.” He then tells them further, that “there is not in every man that knowledge: for some, with conscience of the idol, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol.” Here, then, is an ignorant, mistaken, ill-informed conscience; and yet he tells them that this conscience, so ill-informed, yet binds the possessor of it: “their conscience, being weak, is defiled.” For example: there could be no harm in eating the flesh of an animal that had been offered to an idol or false god; for a false god is nothing, and it is impossible for that flesh to have contracted positive defilement by being offered to that which is a positive and absolute negation. And yet if any man thought it wrong to eat such flesh, to him it *was* wrong; for in that act there would be a deliberate act of transgression—a deliberate preference of that which was mere enjoyment, to that which was apparently, though it may be only apparently, sanctioned by the law of God. And so that act would carry with it all the disobedience, all the guilt, and all the misery which belongs to the doing of an act altogether wrong; or, as St. Paul expresses it, the conscience would become defiled.

Here, then, we arrive at the first distinction—the distinction between absolute and relative right and wrong. Absolute right and absolute wrong, like absolute truth, can each be but *one* and unalterable in the sight of God. The one absolute *right*—the charity of God and the sacrifice of Christ—this, from eternity to eternity, must be the sole measure of eternal right. But human right or human wrong—that is, the merit or demerit of any action done by any particular

man—must be measured, not by that absolute standard, but as a matter relative to his particular circumstances, the state of the age in which he lives, and his own knowledge of right and wrong. For we come into this world with a moral sense; or, to speak more Christianly, with a conscience. And yet that will tell us but very little distinctly. It tells us broadly that which is right and that which is wrong, so that every child can understand this. That charity and self-denial are right—this we see recognized in almost every nation. But the boundaries of these two—when and how far self-denial is right—what are the bounds of charity—this it is for different circumstances yet to bring out and determine.

And so it will be found that there is a different standard among different nations and in different ages. That, for example, which was the standard among the Israelites in the earlier ages, and before their settlement in Canaan, was very different from the higher and truer standard of right and wrong recognized by the later prophets. And the standard in the third and fourth centuries after Christ was truly and unquestionably an entirely different one from that recognized in the nineteenth century among ourselves. Let me not be mistaken. I do not say that right and wrong are merely conventional, or merely chronological or geographical, or that they vary with latitude and longitude. I do not say that there ever was or ever can be a nation so utterly blinded and perverted in its moral sense as to acknowledge that which is wrong—seen and known to be wrong—as right; or, on the other hand, to profess that which is seen and understood as right, to be wrong. But what I do say is this: that the form and aspect in which different deeds appear, so vary, that there will be forever a change and alteration in men's opinions, and that which is really most generous may seem most base, and that which is really most base may appear most generous. So, for example, as I have already said, there are two things universally recognized—recognized as right by every man whose conscience is not absolutely perverted—charity and self-denial. The charity of God, the sacrifice of Christ—these are the two grand, leading principles of the Gospel; and in some form or other you will find these lying at the roots of every profession and state of feeling in almost every age. But the form in which these appear will vary with all the gradations which are to be found between the lowest savage state and the highest and most enlightened Christianity. Many nations and ages have caricatured them—dislocated, perverted them.

For example: in ancient Israel the law of love was expounded thus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." Among the American Indians and at the Cape, the only homage, perchance, given to self-denial was the strange admiration given to that prisoner of war who bore with unflinching fortitude the torture of his country's enemies. In ancient India the same principle was exhibited, but in a more strange and perverted manner. The homage there given to self-denial, self-sacrifice, was this—that the highest form of religion was considered to be that exhibited by the devotee who sat in a tree until the birds had built their nests in his hair—until his nails, like those of the King of Babylon, had grown like birds' talons—until they had grown into his hands, and he became absorbed into the Divinity. We will take another instance, and one better known. In ancient Sparta it was the custom to teach children to steal. And here there would seem to be a contradiction to our proposition—here it would seem as if right and wrong were matters merely conventional; for surely stealing can never be any thing but wrong. But if we look deeper we shall see that there is no contradiction here. It was not stealing which was admired; the child was punished if the theft was discovered; but it was the dexterity which was admired, and that because it was a warlike virtue, necessary, it may be, to a people in continual rivalry with their neighbors. It was not that honesty was despised and dishonesty esteemed, but that honesty and dishonesty were made subordinate to that which appeared to them of higher importance, namely, the duty of concealment. And so we come back to the principle which we laid down at first. In every age, among all nations, the same broad principle remains, but the application of it varies. The conscience may be ill-informed, and in this sense only are right and wrong conventional—varying with latitude and longitude, depending upon chronology and geography.

The principle laid down by the Apostle Paul is this: A man will be judged, not by the abstract law of God, but by the rule of absolute right, but much rather by the relative law of conscience. This he states most distinctly—looking at the question on both sides. That which seems to a man to be right is, in a certain sense, right to him, and that which seems to a man to be wrong, in a certain sense *is* wrong to him. For example: he says, in his Epistle to the Romans (v. 13), that "sin is not imputed when there is no law;" in other words, if a man does not really know a thing to be wrong, there is a sense in which, if not right to him, it ceases to be

so wrong as it would otherwise be. With respect to the other of these sides, however, the case is still more distinct and plain. Here, in the judgment which the apostle delivers in another chapter of the Epistle to the Romans (the fourteenth), he says, "I know, and am persuaded of the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." In other words, whatever may be the abstract merits of the question—however in God's jurisprudence any particular act may stand—to you, thinking it to be wrong, it manifestly *is* wrong, and your conscience will gather round it a stain of guilt if you do it.

In order to understand this more fully, let us take a few instances. There is a difference between *truth* and *veracity*. Veracity—mere veracity—is a small, poor thing; truth is something greater and higher. Veracity is merely the correspondence between some particular statement and facts; truth is the correspondence between a man's whole soul and reality. It is possible for a man to say that which, unknown to him, is false; and yet he may be true; because, if deprived of truth he is deprived of it unwillingly. It is possible, on the other hand, for a man to utter veracities, and yet, at the very time that he is uttering those veracities, to be false to himself, to his brother, and to his God.

One of the most signal instances of this is to be seen in the Book of Job. Most of what Job's friends said to him were veracious statements. Much of what Job said for himself was unveracious and mistaken. And yet those veracities of theirs were so torn from all connection with fact and truth, that they became falsehoods; and they were, as has been said, nothing more than "orthodox liars" in the sight of God. On the other hand, Job, blundering perpetually, and falling into false doctrine, was yet a true man—searching for and striving after the truth; and if deprived of it for a time, deprived of it with all his heart and soul unwillingly. And therefore it was that at last the Lord appeared out of the whirlwind, to confound the men of mere veracity, and to stand by and support the honor of the heartily true.

Let us apply the principle further. It is a matter of less importance that a man should state true views, than that he should state views truly. We will put this in its strongest form. Unitarianism is false—Trinitarianism is true. But yet, in the sight of God, and with respect to a man's eternal destinies hereafter, it would surely be better for him earnestly, honestly, truly, to hold the doctrines of Unitarianism, than in a cowardly or indifferent spirit, or influenced by au-

thority, or from considerations of interest, or for the sake of lucre, to hold the doctrines of Trinitarianism.

For instance: Not many years ago the Church of Scotland was severed into two great divisions, and gave to this age a marvellous proof that there is still amongst us the power of living faith—when five hundred ministers gave up all that earth holds dear—position in the Church they had loved; friendships and affections formed, and consecrated by long fellowship, in its communion; and almost their hopes of gaining a livelihood—rather than assert a principle which seemed to them to be a false one. Now, my brethren, surely the question in such a case for us to consider is not this merely—whether of the two sections held the abstract *right*—held the principle in its integrity—but surely far rather this: who on either side was true to the light within, true to God, true to the truth as God had revealed it to his soul. That parable of Christ's in which he tells of two brothers sent by their father to the field illustrates sincerity and insincerity: "I go not, but afterwards he repented and went;" "I go, sir, and went not." One was the right profession—which was the true heart?

Now it is precisely upon this principle that we are enabled to indulge a Christian hope that many of those who in ancient times were persecutors, for example, may yet be absolved at the bar of Christ. Nothing can make persecution right—it is wrong, essentially, eternally wrong in the sight of God. And yet, if a man sincerely and assuredly thinks that Christ has laid upon him a command to persecute with fire and sword, it is surely better that he should, in spite of all feelings of tenderness and compassion, cast aside the dearest affections at the supposed command of his Redeemer, than that he should, in mere laxity and tenderness, turn aside from what seems to him to be his duty. At least, this appears to be the opinion of the Apostle Paul. He tells us that he was "a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious," that "he did many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," that "being exceedingly mad against the disciples, he persecuted them even unto strange cities." But he tells us further, that "for this cause he obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly in unbelief." Now take a case precisely opposite. In ancient times the Jews did that by which it appeared to them that they would contract defilement and guilt—they spared the lives of the enemies which they had taken in battle. Brethren, the eternal law is, that charity is right, and that law is eternally right which says, "Thou shalt love thine enemy." And had the Jews acted

upon this principle, they would have done well to spare their enemies: but they did it thinking it to be wrong, transgressing that law which commanded them to slay their idolatrous enemies, not from generosity, but in cupidity—not from charity, but from laxity in zeal. And doing thus, the act was altogether wrong.

2. Such is the apostle's exposition of the law of Christian conscience. Let us now, in the second place, consider the applications, both of a personal and of a public nature, which arise out of it.

The first application is a personal one. It is this: Do what *seems* to you to be right: it is only so that you will at last learn by the grace of God to see clearly what *is* right. A man thinks within himself that it is God's law and God's will that he should act thus and thus. There is nothing possible for us to say—there is no advice for us to give—but this, "You *must* so act." He is responsible for the opinions he holds, and still more for the way in which he arrived at them—whether in a slothful and selfish, or in an honest and truth-seeking manner; but being now his soul's convictions, you can give no other law than this—"You must obey your conscience." For no man's conscience gets so seared by doing what is wrong unknowingly, as by doing that which appears to be wrong to his conscience. The Jews' consciences did not get seared by their slaying the Canaanites, but they did become seared by their failing to do what appeared to them to be right. Therefore, woe to you if you do what others think right, instead of obeying the dictates of your own conscience; woe to you if you allow authority, or prescription, or fashion, or influence, or any other human thing, to interfere with that awful and sacred thing—your own responsibility. "Every man," said the apostle, "must give an account of himself to God."

The second application of this principle has reference to others. No doubt, to the large, free, enlightened mind of the Apostle Paul, all these scruples and superstitions must have seemed mean, trivial, and small indeed. It was a matter to him of far less importance that truth should be *established*, than that it should be arrived at truly—a matter of far less importance, even, that right should be done, than that right should be done *rightly*. Conscience was far more sacred to him than even liberty—it was to him a prerogative far more precious to assert the rights of Christian conscience, than to magnify the privileges of Christian liberty. The scruple may be small and foolish, but it may be impossible to uproot the scruple without tearing up the feeling of the sanctity of

conscience, and of reverence for the law of God, associated with this scruple.

And therefore the Apostle Paul counsels these men to abridge their Christian liberty, and not to eat of those things which had been sacrificed to idols, but to have compassion upon the scruples of their weaker brethren. And this for two reasons: The first of these is a mere reason of Christian feeling. It might cause exquisite pain to sensitive minds to see those things which appeared to them to be wrong, done by Christian brethren. Now you may take a parallel case. It may be, if you will, mere superstition to bow at the name of Jesus. It may be, and no doubt is, founded upon a mistaken interpretation of that passage in the Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 10), which says that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." But there are many congregations in which this has been the long-established rule, and there are many Christians who would feel pained to see such a practice discontinued—as if it implied a declension from the reverence due to "that name which is above every name." Now, what in this case is the Christian duty? Is it this—to stand upon our Christian liberty? Or is it not rather this—to comply with a prejudice which is manifestly a harmless one, rather than give pain to a Christian brother?

Take another case. It may be a mistaken scruple, but there is no doubt that it causes much pain to many Christians to see a carriage used on the Lord's day. But you, with higher views of the spirit of Christianity, who know that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath"—who can enter more deeply into the truth taught by our blessed Lord, that every day is to be dedicated to Him and consecrated to His service—upon the high principle of Christian liberty, you can use your carriage—you can exercise your liberty. But if there are Christian brethren to whom this would give pain—then I humbly but most earnestly ask you, What is the duty here? Is it not this—to abridge your Christian liberty—and to go through rain, and mud, and snow, rather than give pain to one Christian conscience? I will give one more instance. The words, and garb, and customs, of that sect of Christians called Quakers, may be formal enough; founded, no doubt, as in the former case, upon a mistaken interpretation of a passage in the Bible. But they are at least harmless; and have long been associated with the simplicity and benevolence, and devout humbleness of this body of Christians—the followers of one who, three hundred years ago, set out upon the glorious enterprise of making all men friends. Now would it be Chris-



tian, or would it not rather be something more than unchristian—would it not also be gross rudeness and coarse unfeelingness—to treat such words and habits and customs with any thing but respect and reverence?

Further: the apostle enjoined this duty of abridging their Christian liberty upon the Corinthian converts, not merely because to indulge it might give pain to others, but also because it might even lead their brethren into sin. For, if any man should eat of the flesh offered to an idol, feeling himself justified by his conscience, it were well; but if any man, overborne by authority or interest, were to do this, not according to conscience, but against it, there would be a distinct and direct act of disobedience—a conflict between his sense of right, and the gratification of his appetites or the power of influence; and then his compliance would as much damage his conscience and moral sense as if the act had been wrong in itself.

Now, in the personal application of these remarks, there are three things which I have to say. The first is this: Distinguish, I pray you, between this tenderness for a brother's conscience and mere time-serving. This same apostle, whom we here see so gracefully giving way upon the ground of expediency when Christian principles were left entire, was the same who stood firm and strong as a rock when any thing was demanded which trespassed upon Christian principle. When some required, as a matter of necessity for salvation, that these converts should be circumcised, the apostle says—"To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour!" It was not indifference—it was not cowardice—it was not the mere love of peace, purchased by the sacrifice of principle, that prompted this counsel—but it was Christian love—that delicate and Christian love which dreads to tamper with the sanctities of a brother's conscience.

The second thing we have to say is this—that this abridgment of their liberty is a duty more especially incumbent upon all who are possessed of influence. There are some men, happily for themselves we may say, who are so insignificant that they can take their course quietly in the valleys of life; they can exercise the fullest Christian liberty, without giving pain to others. But it is the price which all who are possessed of influence must pay, that their acts must be measured, not in themselves, but according to their influence on others. So, my Christian brethren, to bring this matter home to every-day experience and common life, if the landlord uses his authority and influence to induce his tenant to vote against his conscience, it may be he has secured one

voice to the principle which is right, or, at all events, to that which seemed to him to be right; but he has gained that single voice at the sacrifice and expense of a brother's soul. Or again—if, for the sake of insuring personal politeness and attention, the rich man puts a gratuity into the hand of a servant of some company which has forbidden him to receive it, he gains the attention, he insures the politeness, but he gains it at the sacrifice and expense of a man and a Christian brother.

The last remark which we have to make is this: How possible it is to mix together the vigor of a masculine and manly intellect with the tenderness and charity which is taught by the Gospel of Christ! No man ever breathed so freely, when on earth, the air and atmosphere of heaven as the Apostle Paul—no man ever soared so high above all prejudices, narrowness, littlenesses, scruples, as he; and yet no man ever bound himself as St. Paul bound himself to the ignorance, the scruples, the prejudices of his brethren. So that, what in other cases was infirmity, imbecility, and superstition, gathered round it in his case the pure high spirit of Christian charity and Christian delicacy. And now, out of the writings, and sayings, and deeds of those who loudly proclaim “the rights of man” and “the rights of liberty,” match us if you can with one sentence so sublime, so noble—one that will so stand at the bar of God hereafter—as this single, glorious sentence of his, in which he asserts the rights of Christian conscience above the claims of Christian liberty—“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”

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## LECTURE XIX.

1 CORINTHIANS ix. *February 8, 1852.*

THIS last verse is unintelligible, except taken in connection with the preceding part of the chapter. It is commonly quoted in the Calvinistic Controversy, to prove the possibility of the believer's final fall. It is contended by some that St. Paul was not certain of salvation, and that it was possible, after all his labor in the cause of Christ, he might be a cast-away. In reality, the passage has nothing whatever to do with this. The word here translated “castaway” is literally “reprobate”—that which, being tested, fails. “Reprobate silver shall men call them,” St. Paul says; “lest after, when

I have preached to others, I myself, when tried by the same standard, should fail." We shall find that this will become more intelligible by the exposition of this chapter.

In the last chapter St. Paul had laid down the principle that it was good to avoid all injury to the scruples and conscientious superstitions of weaker brethren. When Christian liberty permits indulgence—very often Christian love says, Abstain. As in the sentence, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

Let us, however, understand the apostle's principle, so as not to misrepresent or exaggerate it. Distinguish this principle of avoiding offense to conscientious scruples, from yielding to *all* scruples. You are not, in order to avoid hurting another's conscience, to act against your own. Nor are you to yield or concede in a case where his conscience or scruples recommend something wrong. In this case, conscience required the Corinthians to do what was evidently harmless; abstaining from eating meats was an act of reverence to God, and was accepted by him because done in faith. So in the instances alleged in the last lecture—the dress of the Quakers—bowing at the name of Jesus—the abstinence from a cavil in these matters is accepted, just as the sacrifices were. For you would be pleased if an ignorant person were to present you with something you did not value, but on which, because he thought you did value it, he had spent time and pains. To you it is worthless intrinsically, but as an evidence of affection it is invaluable.

So in the case of fasting—abstinence on certain days is well-pleasing to God, if done in faith. And it would be rude and coarse, harsh and unloving, to sneer at such acts, or to tempt men who believe them to be sacred duties, by our ridicule or example, to give them up.

But if something were done which is not only not commanded, but forbidden, it is no Christian duty to connive. You would bow at the name of Jesus because, where it was universally the custom, you might hurt the feelings of your brethren by refusing to do so; but you would not bow at the passing of the host, because that would imply belief in a downright falsehood; and, therefore, as you could not avoid insulting a Romish prejudice, you would hold it to be your duty to absent yourself from the most magnificent ceremony, or from the sublimest music that ever thrilled through St. Peter's.

Again, let us note another exception. Practices which in themselves are harmless may be withstood, because of their

consequences at peculiar times. Thus St. Paul was gentle about trifles, whereas the Reformers were stiff. He yielded to Jewish prejudices about sacrifices, because they implied reverence to a truth. The Reformers were unyielding in the matter of Romish rites and forms—trifling enough in themselves—because they implied adherence to false and dangerous errors. And so, too, St. Paul at one time circumcised Timothy, because it implied symbolical holiness. At another he refused to circumcise Titus, because it was then and there reckoned essential to salvation, and for that reason insisted on.

This, then, was St. Paul's principle. But to this teaching an objection might be raised. Some may say, It is easy enough to advise: fine doctrine this, of conscience and tenderness to weaker brethren—conscientious prejudices. Does the apostle practise what he preaches? Or is it merely a fine sentiment? Does he preach to others, himself being a castaway—that is, one who, being tested, is found wanting? The whole of the ninth chapter bears on this question. It is an assertion of his own consistency. He proves that he submitted himself for love's sake to restriction, to which he was not in absolute duty bound.

I. The first part of this chapter is occupied in proving his right to certain privileges.

II. His salutary abstinence from many of them.

I. The privileges to which he had a right were domestic solaces and ministerial maintenance. Have we not power to lead about a sister-wife, that is, a wife who was one of the Christian sisterhood? Have we not, Barnabas and I, power to forbear working? The right to the first of these privileges he proves by the position of the other Apostles: Cephas and others were married men. His right to the second, that of maintenance, he proves by his apostleship: "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free?" that is, not compelled to labor.

The apostolic or ministerial right he bases on four arguments: 1. By a principle universally recognized in human practice. A king warring on behalf of a people, wars at their charge—a planter of a vineyard expects to eat of the fruit—a shepherd is entitled to eat of the milk of the flock. All who toil for the good of others derive an equivalent from them. Gratuitous devotion of life is nowhere considered obligatory. 2. By a principle implied in a scriptural particular enactment, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." Did God, in this, take special care for oxen? or was it a great general principle—human, not confined to

a single isolated case, but capable of extension to the plougher and the sower? The ox was provided for, not because it was an ox, but because it was a laborer. 3. By a principle of fairness and reciprocity, as taught in the second verse, great services establish a claim. One who has saved another's life has a right to recompense. It is not merely a matter of option. If they owed to the apostle their souls, his time had a claim on their gold. 4. By the law of the temple-service, the priests were supported by a special provision; animals sacrificed to God belonged partly to them. The whole Jewish ritual—the institution of Levites and priests—implied the principle that there are two kinds of labor—of hand and of brain; and that the toilers with the brain, though not producers, have a claim on the community. They are essential to its well-being, and are not mere drones. By all these arguments he proves his right.

Now it is our business at this time to insist on the right. True, the apostle waived it for himself; but he did this under special circumstances. He felt peculiarly bound, as specially and wonderfully saved. He had a peculiar gift qualifying him for celibacy. He lived in peculiar times, when it was necessary to have unmistakably *clean hands*, to be above all suspicion of mercenary motives.

But what was a duty in his case might be contrary to duty in another; for example, when a family is to be maintained, the forfeiture of the stipend would be distinctly wrong. There is, therefore, no shame in receiving hire; there is no disgrace in toil, no dishonor in receiving wages. It is a false shame and false delicacy to feel that the fee with hire is a stain, or the receiving of it a mercenary act.

II. We consider, secondly, his own valiant abstinence from these privileges and indulgences (vs. 12, 15). And first, his reasons. In order to do his work in a free, princely, and not a slavish spirit, he was *forced* to preach the Gospel, and for the preaching of it no thanks were due. If he did it against his will, a dispensation of the Gospel was committed to him, and "woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!" He was *bound* to do it. But he turned his necessity to glorious gain. That was his "reward," that is, made him rewardable—by forfeiting pay he got reward: and in doing *freely* what he must do, he became free. When "I must" is changed into "I will," you are free. And so in a profession you dislike—an alliance which is distasteful—a duty that must be done—acquiescence is Christian liberty. It is deliverance from the law.

His second reason was to gain others. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." For this was only one instance out of many; his whole life was one great illustration of the principle: free from all, he became the servant of all. He condescended to the mode of looking at life that was peculiar to the Gentiles with respect to their education and associations: to that of the Jews also, when form was expressive of a true reverential spirit. Nor less to the weak and superstitious; he sympathized with their weakness, tried to understand them, and to feel as they felt.

Lastly, consider the general principles of our human life. The conditions of this existence are not that you can run as you will—but they are as the conditions of a race: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." You can not go on saying, I have a right to do this, therefore I will do it. You must think how it will *appear*, not for the sake of mere respectability, or merely to obtain a character for consistency, but for the sake of others. And its conditions are as those of a wrestling-match—you must be *temperate* in all things—that is, abstain from even *lawful* indulgences. For he who trained for the amphitheatre abridged himself of indulgences which, under other circumstances, he might and would have used. Then the apostle closes his triumphant argument: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air"—not at hazard, but taking it coolly, as if sure of victory.

Remember, no man liveth to himself. The cry, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is met by St. Paul's clear, steadfast answer, "You are." Herein is opened out to us the exceeding love of the Christian life. Heathenism in its highest efforts contented itself with doing right. Christianity demands that your right shall not lead others wrong; that it shall do no violence to that most sacred and delicate thing, a human conscience.

There is another inference from this chapter which is entirely incidental. In the first part of the chapter, St. Paul introduces the name of Barnabas as associated with himself as his fellow-worker. Now, in earlier life, these two men had quarrelled about Mark, the nephew of Barnabas; and from that time to this, outwardly there had been an estrangement, but now there comes forth this most touching recollection of their past friendship. Let us learn from this what it is that binds men truly together. It is not union in earthly pleasures, for the companions of our pleasures are separated

from us, and we look back to those only with pain and shame. That which separated these two men was, in one a sterner sense of duty; in the other, a tenderness of love; but that which bound them as one forever was self-sacrifice. If there were too much tenderness in Barnabas, there was no love of gold, for he, like St. Paul, preached the Gospel without charge. Union in God through the sacrifice of self—this is alone the indissoluble union; all others are for time.

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## LECTURE XX.

1 CORINTHIANS X. *February 22, 1852.*

THIS chapter closes with a return to the subject which had been already discussed in the eighth and ninth chapters. Obviously the intermediate argument is connected with it, although this connection is not clear at first sight. St. Paul had laid down a principle that Christian liberty is limited by Christian charity: "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient." Then he had shown that he himself obeyed the same law which he imposed on his converts. He had abridged his own liberty: he had foregone his right to domestic solaces and ministerial support: he had not preached to others, and been himself a castaway. But then this very word "castaway" brought the subject into a more serious light, and the idea contained in it is the hinge on which this chapter turns.

There was much "light and liberty" in Corinth. Large words were there, and a large comprehension of the Gospel scheme. But it was light without warmth or life, and liberty without charity. There were large words without large action, and a faith which worked not by love. And all this gave rise to serious misgivings in the apostle's mind. This boasted Church of Corinth, with its sharp and restless intellect, would it stand? Were the symptoms it exhibited those of bursting health or only of active disease? So thought St. Paul, and therefore the key-note of the whole chapter is the twelfth verse: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Consider then, I. The danger of the Corinthian Church.

Their peril lay in their false security: they were tempted to think that all things were safe to do, because all things were lawful. They were ready to rest satisfied with the

knowledge that they were God's people and God's Church. Now the apostle shakes this sense of their safety by reminding them that the ancient Church of Israel fell, although it had the same privileges: therefore he infers that spiritual privileges are not perfect security. Now the argument by which he proves that the privileges of ancient Israel were similar to theirs, is remarkable. That people had a baptism as well as they, and a spiritual food and drink: "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink."

Baptism is the solemn profession of our Christianity; and the passing through the Red Sea was the Israelites' profession of discipleship to Moses: then they passed the Rubicon, the die was cast, and thenceforward there was no return for them. One solemn step had severed them forever from Egypt; and the cloud-guidance which then began kept the memory of this act before them by a constant witness in all their journeyings. So far, then, this is equivalent to baptism, which is discipleship: a sacrament or oath of obedience, the force of which is kept up and recalled by an outward sign. They had another sacrament in the "Rock that followed them." The rock did not literally follow them, as the rabbins have with dullness dreamed; but, go where they would, the wondrous waters from the rock flowed by their path and camp. Figuratively, therefore, it followed; the life of it streamed after them: they were never without its life-giving influence; and therefore never destitute of a sacrament: "that Rock was Christ." And here observe the apostle's view of the "sacramental principle." As Christ said of the bread, "This is my body," so St. Paul declares, "That Rock was Christ;" not that the bread was literally transformed into His body, or that the rock was changed into Christ; nor, again, merely that bread represented the body of Christ, or that the rock represented Christ, but this—that which is wondrous in the bread and rock, the life-giving power in both, is Christ. The symbol as a material is nothing; the spirit in it—Christ—is every thing.

Now the mystic and formalist say these signs, and these only, convey grace: sacraments are miraculous. But St. Paul says to the Corinthians, the Jews had symbols as living as yours. Bread, wine, water, cloud—it matters not what the material is. God's Presence is every thing; God's power, God's life—wherever these exist, *there*, there is a sacrament. What is the lesson, then, which we learn? Is it that God's life, and love, and grace, are limited to certain mate-



rials, such as the rock, the bread, or the wine? is it that we are doing an awful act only when we baptize? or is it not much rather, that all here is sacramental, that we live in a fearful and a Divine world; that every simple meal, that every gushing stream, every rolling river, and every drifting cloud is the symbol of God, and a sacrament to every *open* heart? And the power of recognizing and feeling this makes all the difference between the religious and the irreligious spirit. There were those, doubtless, in the wilderness who saw nothing mysterious or wonderful in the following water. They rationalized upon its origin: it quenched their thirst, and that was all it meant to *them*. But there were others to whom it was the very love and power of God.

Having, then, established this parallel, the apostle draws his conclusion. The Jews had as full privileges as you Corinthians have, and yet they fell; you have your privileges, but you may see in these examples that privileges are no cause for security, but only for greater heed. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." But according to a common view of the Christian state, it is one of easier requirement than the Jewish, more merciful and more lax in its commandments and their sanctions. The Jews, it is urged, were severely punished if they sinned, but Christians may sin, and be more mercifully dealt with. You can not read this Epistle or that to the Hebrews and think so. "These things happened unto them for examples, and were written for *our* admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And the punishments which their offenses met with are specimens of those which we may expect.

Four special sins of the Israelites are mentioned by St. Paul as corresponding to the circumstances in which he found the Corinthian Church: idolatry, impurity, doubt, and discontent. "Is God among us, or not?" said the people in the wilderness, tempting Jehovah. Think you we shall be less punished than they, if we similarly tempt our God? This chapter gives the answer. Here, then, we meet a very solemn truth: the sacrifice of Christ does not alter God's will: it does not make sin a trifle: it does not make it safer to commit offenses. It does not abrogate, but declares God's law. "He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God and put Him to an open shame!" And these Corinthians were boasting of their privileges, vaunting their liberties, talking of rights instead of doing duties, speaking of freedom, brotherhood, and rea-

son, and all the time the same God who judged the people in the wilderness was ruling *them* by the same unalterable laws.

II. The second thing contained in this chapter is the resumption of the argument on the difficulty about eating meat offered to idols, with further advice respecting it.

Let me recall briefly what the difficulty was. If they ate the meat, they seemed to sanctify idolatry: if they abstained, they seemed to say that an idol was a real being, and so they gave a sanction to superstition. It was one of those circumstances where a true decision on a duty lay in great obscurity. Now the apostle admits it to be a difficulty, but he will not allow them to think it an inextricable one. There is no excuse here for acting wrong: "there has no temptation taken you which is not common to man:" there is a way of escape, and by it they may rescue themselves without either guilt or hypocrisy. He had already counselled them to abstain for the sake of love, lest their example might lead their weaker brethren to sin by violating their conscience: now he takes higher ground, and this is his argument. Every sacrificial feast in all religions is a kind of worship: in the Christian religion there was the Lord's Supper, and all they who participated in that rite were Christians. They communicated with Christ, they declared His character was their standard of life: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" And, further, in the Jewish religion all who ate of the Jewish offerings were Jews; they professed themselves to be such by sharing in the act. Thus, in the same way as all who partook of Christian sacrifices were Christians, and all who took part in Jewish were Jews, so all who sat at meat in idolatrous feasts communicated with idols, and formed one society with idolatrous worshippers. Such acts as these brought confusion into opinion and the Church: "Ye can not drink the cup of devils."

Here, however, a difficulty arose. Could the apostle mean this literally? Partaking of Jewish altars, they shared, he said, with God; of Christian, with Christ; of heathen, with idols! Then the idol was a real thing, after all? But in answer to this St. Paul explains himself: "What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols any thing?" No; but the Gentiles sacrifice their offerings, *as to a demon*. The heathen thought it a sacrifice to a real god, and would reckon any one who ate of it as a fellow-worshipper with them of a demon: hence the Corinthian Church could not do it without conveying a false im-

pression: their presence would be taken as a sanction of heathenism. Thus these religious banquets being not only an injury to the Church, but also to the heathen, the apostle, indignant at this wrong, breaks out into forcible language, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He?"

With St. Paul we infer, in conclusion, two practical truths:

1. The law by which the Lord's Supper binds us to God. "Ye can not drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils." The term sacrament has been already discussed: that feast is now called "communion:" in it we have fellowship with God and His Church: it is the witness to the communion of saints. To some who attend it the Lord's Supper is a mere form; with others it is a means of some good, they know not what. But except so far as it keeps us from evil, it is only a fresh cause of guilt; for go to that table meaning to sin, to be selfish and worldly—well, then, you are a traitor to God and His Church.

2. The duty of attending to appearances.

Nothing can be more plain than the wise Christian casuistry by which St. Paul taught the Corinthians how to avoid hypocrisy on the one side, and a sanction of idolatry on the other. They were not to torment themselves with unnecessary scruples, else life would be a haunted thing. Live on freely and trustfully, said the apostle; all things are yours. Enjoy all; but if any man be likely to mistake the act, if he observe on it, or call it inconsistent, eat not. Now we may think this time-serving; but the motive made all the difference: "Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other." Study appearances, therefore, so far as they are likely to be injurious to others.

Here, then, is the principle and the rule: we can not live in this world indifferent to appearances. Year by year we are more and more taught this truth. It is irksome, no doubt, to be under restraint; to have to ask not only, "Does God permit this?" but, "Will it not be misconstrued by others?" and to a free, open, fiery spirit, such as the Apostle of the Gentiles, doubly irksome, and almost intolerable? Nevertheless, it was to him a most solemn consideration: Why should I make my goodness and my right the occasion of blasphemy? Truly, then, and boldly, and not carelessly, he determined to give no offense to Jews or Gentiles, or to the Church of God, but to please all men. And the measure or restraint of this resolution was that, in carrying it into practice, he would seek not his own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved.

## LECTURE XXI.

1 CORINTHIANS xi. 1-17. *March 21, 1852.*

As the Gospels declare the principles of Christianity, so the Epistles exhibit those principles in their application to actual life. Specially valuable in this respect is this Epistle to the Corinthians, which might be defined as Christianity applied to the details of ordinary life. Now, large principles, when taken up by ardent and enthusiastic minds, without the modifications learnt by experience, are almost sure to run into extravagances; and hence the spirit of law is by degrees reduced to rules, and guarded by customs. Of this danger Christianity, which is a set of great principles, partook, a fact well proved by the existent state of the Corinthian Church; and for this reason in actual life it is expressed in rules and customs, such as we find laid down by the Apostle Paul in this Epistle. In this chapter we meet two of those extravagant abuses of Christian truth which arose from its too enthusiastic reception.

I. Respecting the conduct and deportment of Christian women.

II. Respecting the administration of the Lord's Supper.

Of the first I will speak to-day. A broad principle laid down by Christianity was human equality: "One is your Master, even Christ;" and again, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Observe, not only is the distinction between Jew and Gentile abolished, but also the equality of man and woman is declared. We all know how fruitful a cause of popular commotion the teaching of equality has been in every age. Yet it is Scripture doctrine. Now similarly, in the Corinthian Church, this doctrine of the abolition of distinctions between the sexes threatened to lead to much social confusion. A claim was made for a right and power in woman to do all that men should do. They demanded that they should teach, preach, and pray in public, and have political privileges of exact equality. Strange, too, as it may seem, a Christian right was claimed to appear unveiled in the public assemblies.

Now respecting the first of these claims, the apostle's rule was that laid down in 1 Tim. ii. 12: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Respecting the second, St. Paul in this chapter commands the woman not to affect an attire that was unbecoming to her sex. Let us first take the verses in order which have reference to attire.

It is one advantage attending on this our habit of exposition, that in turn every part of the Word of God must be expounded. Many passages that are rarely treated force themselves thus upon us; and in honesty we are bound to pass by nothing. And this I hold to be true reverence for God's Word, true proof of belief in its inspiration. For many who are vehement upon the doctrine of inspiration never read large portions of the Scriptures all their lives, and confine their attention to certain passages and certain parts of the Bible. Now here are some verses which, left to ourselves, we should certainly have left untouched, because they are difficult to treat in such a way as shall afford no pretext for flippant listeners to smile. And really, if they only concerned a transient fashion of attire, such as then existed in Corinth, they might be omitted, for the Eternal Spirit surely does not condescend to fix unalterable rules of dress. But let us see what principles lie below St. Paul's decision.

The first reason of his prohibition is, that it was a rash defiance of those established rules of decorum that were rooted in the feelings of the country. The veiled head in the text is a symbol of dependence, and a token also of modesty; for to pray unveiled was to insult all the conventional feelings of Jew and Gentile. Here let us distinguish between rules and principles: of course, there is no eternal rule in this; it can not be a law forever that man should appear habited in one way and woman in another, and it is valuable to us only so far as a principle is involved.

Though in Eastern countries reverence was exhibited by taking off the sandal, yet the Holy Ghost has not caused this mode of showing reverence to be imposed on the Church, nor yet this fashion of a veil; but the principle contained in these observances is not temporary, but eternal. If it be true, as it most unquestionably is true, that we know not how much of our English liberty we owe to our attachment to the past, so also is it almost impossible to decide how much of our public morality and private purity is owing to that same spirit which refuses to overstep the smallest bound of ordinary decorum.

Once more, the use of the veil was a representation and sym-

bol of dependence. It is the doctrine of St. Paul that, as Christ is dependent on God, and man is dependent on Christ, so is woman dependent on man. St. Paul perceived that the law of Christian equality was quite consistent with the vast system of subordination running through the universe: "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God;" which two things we see he distinctly unites in verses 11 and 12 when he says, "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God." He asserts subordination in one sense, and denies it in another; and therefore bids the foolish question of "Which is the greater?" to cease forever; for he distinguishes between inferiority and subordination, that each sex exists in a certain order, not one as greater than the other, but both great and right in being what God intended them to be.

The second reason assigned for the apostle's prohibition is an appeal to natural instincts and perceptions, to natural propriety. "Doth not even nature itself teach you that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her as a veil." And this he extends still further in 1 Tim. ii. 12, so far as to forbid public expositions by women altogether; for, inspired with strong feeling, such as accompanied the outpouring of the Spirit in the early ages, the Christian women broke out at the church-gatherings into prophesyings.

Observe how the Apostle Paul falls back on nature. In nothing is the difference greater between fanaticism and Christianity than in their treatment of natural instincts and affections. Fanaticism defies nature. Christianity refines it and respects it. Christianity does not denaturalize, but only sanctifies and refines according to the laws of nature. Christianity does not destroy our natural instincts, but gives them a higher and a nobler direction—for instance, natural resentment becomes elevated into holy indignation. Christianity does not dry up tears, forbidding their flow; but rather infuses into them a heavenly hope. It does not make Scythian, Barbarian, and "Israelites indeed" all alike; but retains their peculiar differences. It does not make Peter, Paul, and John mere repetitions of one aspect of human character; but draws out into distinctive prominence the courage of one, the self-denying zeal of another, and the tender love of a third. And

just as the white light of heaven does not make all things white, but the intenser it is, so much more intense becomes the green, the blue, or the red; and just as the rain of heaven falling on tree and plant develops the vigor of each—every tree and herb “yielding seed after his kind;” and just as leaven does not change the mass into something new, but makes elastic, and firm, and springy, that which was dull and heavy before: so the Spirit of Christ develops each nation, sex, and individual, according to their own nature, and not the nature of another—making man more manly, and woman more womanly. And thus, in all those questions which belong to equality, the ultimate decision is not by theoretical abstractions, but by an appeal to nature and to fact. But let us not forget that here too there are exceptions. Beware of a dead, hard rule. Let each develop himself, according to his own nature. Whatever contradicts feelings which are universally received is questionable, to say the least.

Observe, however, there are modifications in this doctrine of liberty. Theoretically all men are equal, and all have equal rights; but when we apply this to daily life, we are clouded in uncertainty. Therefore the only remedy is that given by St. Paul in this chapter—that the abstract principle shall be modified by common sense, human nature, and holy Christian experience.

There is also the modification of the right of private judgment. It is a well-known rule that that which has been held everywhere and at all times is to be received as true; this modifies, though it does not destroy, the right of private judgment. There have been many instances in which one man standing against the world has been right, and the world wrong—as Elijah, Athanasius, Luther, and others. Therefore these two things must modify each other. But in questions of morality, propriety, decency, when we find ourselves—our own individual desires and private judgment—contradicted by the general experience, habit, and belief of all the purest and the best around us, then most assuredly Christian modesty and the doctrine of this chapter command us to believe that the many are right, and that we are wrong.

## LECTURE XXII.

1 CORINTHIANS xi. 18-34. *March 28, 1852.*

THE remainder of this chapter treats of an abuse in the administration of the Lord's Supper, as practised in the Church of Corinth. It may be necessary here to go a little into historical investigation.

Every Church has a right to introduce new forms and ordinances; and the Church of Corinth, taking advantage of this right, introduced what was called a love-feast, in which the Churches met together previous to the reception of the Lord's Supper, to partake of a common meal—rich and poor bringing their own provisions. This idea seemed in strict accordance with the original institution of the Lord's Supper, for that certainly was preceded by a common meal. There was a great beauty in this arrangement, because it showed the conviction of the Church of Corinth that differences of birth and rank are not eternal but temporary, and are intended to join by reciprocal bonds the different classes together. Still, beautiful as the idea was, it was liable to great abuse. Thus there arises a perpetual lesson for the Church of Christ: it is never good to mix things religious with things worldly. In the highest conceivable form of the Church of Christ, the two will be identified, for the kingdoms of the world are to become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ. In order to make these two one, the Christian plan has been to set apart certain days as holy, that through these all other days may be sanctified: to set apart a certain class of men, through them to sanctify all other men: to set apart one particular meal, that all meals through that one may be dedicated to God.

The world's way is rather this: to identify things religious and worldly by throwing the spirit of the week-day into the Sabbath; to make Christian ministers like other men, by infusing into them its own secular spirit; and to eat and drink of the Lord's Supper in the spirit of a common meal.

In order to rectify the abuses which had grown out of these love-feasts, the apostle recalls to their remembrance the reasons for the original institution of the Lord's Supper, and from them deduces the guilt and responsibility of their



desecration of that ordinance. He says that it was meant as a memorial of the Redeemer's sacrifice.

There may appear to us something superfluous in this ; we should be inclined probably to say, "We need no memorial of that ; it is graven on our hearts as on the rock forever." The Son of Man knew our nature far too well to trust to such a pledge, even if it could have been given. He knew that the remembrance of it would fade without perpetual repetition, and without an appeal to the senses ; therefore by touch, by taste, by sight, we are reminded in the Sacrament that Christianity is not a thing of mere feeling, but a real historical actuality. It sets forth Jesus Christ evidently crucified among us.

Let us draw something practical from this. Memory depends on two things—on repetition, and on the impression being a sensible one, that is, one of which the senses take cognizance.

Does any man wish to forget God ? Does any man wish to live in sin without being disturbed by the painful thought of judgment ? We can tell him how he may insure that—for a time at least. Let him attempt to be wiser than his Maker : let him say, "I can read my Bible at home, and worship God in the open beauties of Nature, as well as in a church : " let him give up private prayer, and never attend the Lord's table, giving up all that is symbolical in religion. Let him do this, and we will insure him most terrible success ; for so "judgment to come" will be to him only an hypothesis, and God's own existence merely a *perhaps*.

The second reason for the institution of the Lord's Supper was to keep in mind Christ's second Advent : "Till He come." When Christ left this world, it was with a promise that He would return again. Ever since that time have the souls of the faithful been preparing and watching for that coming. So, then, there are two feelings which belong to this Supper—abasement and triumph : abasement, because every thing that tells of Christ's sacrifice reminds us of human guilt ; and triumph, because the idea of His coming again, "without sin unto salvation," is full of highest rapture. These two feelings are intended to go hand in hand through life, for that sadness which has not in it a sense of triumph is not Christian, but morbid ; neither is that joy Christian which is without some sense of sorrow. We dearly love the way in which the Church of England celebrates the Supper of the Lord, with a solemn stillness so well befitting the feelings and the occasion.

The next reason for the institution of the Lord's Supper is

to teach the communion of saints. The symbolic elements themselves are intended to teach the Church's unity. The feeling of unity in the Church is that which belongs to fellow-countrymen meeting in a foreign land, or to ancient warriors who have fought side by side in the same battle, and meet in recollection of dangers shared together. So it is with us: we are fellow-soldiers and fellow-pilgrims. This relationship can alone be perpetual. The relation between father and child changes even in this short existence to friendship; even the marriage relationship is only for this life, for in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage. While all other ties shall be dissolved, God stamps on *this* alone something of His own eternity: united in Christ, you are united forever.

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### LECTURE XXIII.

1 CORINTHIANS xii. 1-31. *April 4, 1852.*

IN the course of this exposition, we have often had to remind ourselves that this Epistle was addressed to a Church in a state of faction. One cause of rivalry was respecting the merits of their respective teachers; another cause of rivalry was the endowments of various kinds given to the members of the Church. Instead of occupying and spending themselves in the blessed work of using these endowments to the edification of the Church, they spent their time in quarrelling about the precedence which should be given to these different gifts. This was the natural result of great spiritual activity: it is so in politics: wherever there is freedom and earnestness in debate, there will assuredly arise dissensions. Well did St. Paul know that there must be heresies and factions among them; but he would not say that schism was a trifle; it might be that earnestness could not exist without it, but yet he refused to say that schism was right.

This chapter teaches two things: In it St. Paul sets himself to discuss spiritual gifts and inspiration.

First, the apostle lays down a broad general principle respecting spiritual inspiration; secondly, he determines the place and value of different degrees of spiritual inspiration.

First, he lays down the general principle respecting inspiration in the third verse. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost!" This made the broad separation between the Christian Church and the Gentile world.

This, the great bond of Christians, St. Paul tells us, is far above all distinctions as to the degree of spiritual gifts or inspiration. It is of far more importance to ascertain that a man is a Christian than to find out what sort of Christian he is. This he tells us in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses. In other words, our Christianity is a fact far above our special and particular endowments. Not that in which we differ from other Christians, but that in which we differ from the world lying in wickedness; in *that* consists our distinction in the sight of God. In the thirteenth verse he appeals to the sacraments: does baptism teach of a difference between Christians? does it not rather teach that all the baptized are baptized into one body? There are varieties, differences—yes, says the apostle, but they are all of “the self-same Spirit.”

And now, brethren, let us bring this home personally to ourselves; for the teaching of the pulpit loses its force if mere abstract truths are stated without applying them to ourselves, for human nature is the same throughout all ages. What was it that waked up the energies of these Corinthians most? Was it that which stimulated the sublime spirit of the apostle at Athens when he saw the city wholly given over to idolatry? or was it not rather the difference between sect and sect, party and party? My Christian brethren, what is it that wakes up, in all their force, the polemical energies of this day? Is it opposition to sensuality, to pride, to vice, to evil generally? or is it opposition to some doctrine held by this or that section of the Christian world? Against whom are all the energies of Christian teachers directed? Is it against the oppressor, the tyrant, the seducer? or is it against some poor erring Christian, who, it may be, is wrong in doctrine, but is trying with all his heart to live the *life* of Christ?

Let me bring this more closely home to you, and earnestly entreat the members of this congregation to sever themselves from that bitter spirit of controversy which is tearing asunder Christian society in this town. My Christian brethren, if Christ be your master, what in this world is your foe? Not Tractarianism nor Dissent, neither Popery nor Evangelicalism? These may be more or less forms of error; but they who hold them are your brethren, battling against the same evil as you are. Your foe in this world is vice, the devil-nature in you and in me; it is in ourselves that our foe is; conquer *that*, spend half the energy in trampling *that* down which is spent in religious controversy with Christians, and the kingdom of God will soon be established in this world:

and if you will nōt, then the Word of God gives this solemn warning, "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

We pass on, secondly, to consider the place and value assigned by St. Paul to these differences of spiritual gifts. He states the fact of that difference from the 8th to the 10th verses, and the principle of diversities in the 17th and 18th verses. He begins by stating these as the very conditions of Christian unity. God has given to one man eloquence, to another business-like habits, to some exquisitely fine feelings, to others a more blunted feeling; for even that is a gift, without which some duties could not be suitably performed. The anatomist tells us that precisely as we ascend in the scale of being, so do we find greater diversity in our complexity. Thus is it that we have the distinction between a society and an association; artificial association binds man to man on the principle of similarity, natural society binds men together in diversity.

The idea of the Church presented in the Bible is that of a family, which certainly is not a union of similarity; for the father differs from the mother, the child from the parent, brother from sister, servant from child, and yet together they form a most blessed type of unity. St. Paul carries on this beautiful principle, and draws out of it special personal duties; he says that gifts are granted to individuals for the sake of the whole Church. As he expresses it in another part: "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." After this, he carries on the application farther, and shows that the principle branches out into a twofold duty: first, the duty of those gifted with the inferior gifts; and after that, the duty of those gifted with the higher powers.

The duties of those possessed of inferior gifts he states to be two; not to envy, and not to despond. First, not to envy. Observe here the difference between the Christian doctrine of unity and equality, and the world's doctrine of levelling all to one standard. The intention of God with respect to the body is not that the rude hand should have the delicacy of the eye, or the foot have the power of the brain. The intention of God is to proclaim the real equality of each in mutual sympathy and love. The second duty of those with inferior gifts is not to despond. There are few temptations more common to ardent spirits than that which leads them to repine at the lot in which they are cast, believing that in some other situation they could serve God better; and therefore to every such man St. Paul speaks, telling him that it is his duty to try to be himself: simply to try to do his own duty:

for here in this world we are nothing apart from its strange and curious clock-work; and if each man had the spirit of Self-surrender, the spirit of the Cross, it would not matter to him whether he were doing the work of the mainspring or of one of the inferior parts.

Lastly, St. Paul applies this principle to the duty of those gifted with higher powers; this is also a twofold duty, that of humility and sympathy. They were not to despise those who were inferior. As with the natural body, the rudest parts are the most useful, and the delicate parts require most care, so is it with the body politic; the meanest trades are those with which we can least dispense; a nation may exist without an astronomer or philosopher, but the day-laborer is essential to the existence of man. The second duty of the more highly gifted is taught in the 26th verse. The spirit and the law of the life of Christ is to be that of every member of the Church, and the law of the life of Christ is that of sympathy. Until we have learnt something of this spirit, we can not have a Church at all. How little, during eighteen hundred years, have the hearts of men been got to beat together! Nor can we say that this is the fault of the capitalists and the masters only, it is the fault of the servants and dependents also.

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#### LECTURE XXIV.

1 CORINTHIANS xii. 31; xiii. 1-3. *April 18, 1852.*

THE twelfth chapter of this Epistle discusses the gifts of the Spirit, the thirteenth contrasts them with the grace of charity or love, but the connection between the two is unintelligible unless the last verse of the former be joined to the first of the latter: it is the link between both chapters: "Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." Now the more excellent way is charity. We will consider, then, the Christian estimate of gifts:

- I. In themselves; and,
- II. In reference to graces.

I. Let me first show that this rule applies to ourselves; for it might be doubted, since the Corinthian gifts were in part what we call miraculous, while ours are natural. But you will find that in all essential particulars the resemblance is complete. The gifts of the Church of Corinth were bestow-

ed according to God's pleasure : they were "divided to every man severally as *He* willed." They were profitable to others : "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." They were not the highest perfection of human nature, for a man might have them and yet perish. So is it with ours : we have gifts freely granted, capable of profiting others, and yet capable of being separated from personal or saving holiness. Therefore, to all such gifts essentially coinciding with the nature of the Corinthian gifts, the apostle's rule must apply ; and his rule is this—"Covet earnestly the best gifts."

First, then, consider what a gift is. It is that in which our main strength lies. One man is remarkable for intellectual, and another for moral qualifications. One is highly sensitive, and another firm and unimpressionable. One has exquisite taste, and another capacity for business. One nation is inventive ; and another, like the English, persevering and able to improve inventions. It is well for us to dwell on this, because in our unchristian way of viewing things we are apt to forget that they are gifts, because they seem so simple. But all God's gifts are not sublime. You would all acknowledge prophecy to be a gift, but St. Paul says the humblest faculties are also gifts. The eye is precious, but the foot, in its way, is no less so.

Next, observe that all these *are* gifts : sometimes we fancy they are not, because sad and melancholy moralists remind us that these things are vain. Beauty is fleeting, such men cry ; strength is soon but labor and sorrow. Sound sense doth not save : "Life is thorny, and youth is vain. The path of glory leads but to the grave." A noble name, an honored position, an existence of fame, what are these but dreams ? True, all these *are* transient ; and because so, we are forbidden to set our hearts upon them : "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof." But still, in spite of moralizing, men covet them. And the apostle says it is right : God gave them : do you honor Him by despising them ? They *are* good, but not the higher good. Good so long as they are desired in subservience to the greater good, but evil if they are put in the place of this.

Thirdly, remark that they are to be earnestly cultivated.

There is a mistake into which religious people are apt to fall, but which the apostle avoids ; and this is one of the negative marks of his inspiration. The Apostles were never fanatical ; but ordinary men, when strongly influenced, exaggerate. Now the world makes very little of charity ; and religious men, perceiving the transcendent excellence of this

grace, make very little of talents: nay, some depreciate them as almost worthless. They talk contemptuously of the "mere moral man." They speak of cleverness and gifts of intellect as in themselves bad and dangerous. They weed the finest works of human genius from their libraries. And hence the religious character has a tendency to become feeble, to lose all breadth of view, and all manly grasp of realities. Now, on the contrary, St. Paul prays that the whole soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ), the natural man as well as the spirit, may "be preserved blameless till the coming of Christ."

And again he allows a distinction—"the best gifts."

The same apostle who so earnestly urged contentment with the gifts we have, and forbade contemptuous scorn of others with feeble gifts, bids us yet to aspire. And just as St. Peter said, "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance;" so would St. Paul have said, "Add to your nobility of rank, nobleness of mind; to your naturally strong constitution, health by exercise; to your memory, judgment; to your power of imitating, invention." He permits no dream of fantastic equality, no pretense that all gifts are equal, or all alike precious. He never would have said that the builder who executed was equal to the architect who planned.

Be contented, yet aspire: that should be the faith of all, and the two are quite compatible. And there arises from such a belief the possibility of generous admiration: all the miserable shutting-up of ourselves in superciliousness is done away. Desirous of reaching something higher, we recognize love and what is above ourselves; and this is the condition of excellence, for we become that which we admire.

## II. The estimate of gifts in comparison with graces.

They are less excellent than charity. They are not the perfection of our nature. He who treads the brilliant road of the highest accomplishments is, as a man, inferior to him who treads the path of love. For in the spiritual world a man is measured not by his genius, but by his likeness to God. Intellect is not divine; love is the most essential of all the attributes of God. God does not reason nor remember, but He loves. Thus, to the apostle's mind, there was emptiness in eloquence, nothingness in knowledge and even in faith, uselessness in liberality and sacrifice, where love was not. And none could be better qualified than he to speak. In all these gifts he was pre-eminent; none taught like him the philosophy of Christianity. None had so strong a faith, nor so deep a spirit of self-sacrifice. In no other writings are we so re-

finer and exalted by "the thoughts which breathe and words that burn." And yet, in solitary pre-eminence above all these gifts, he puts the grace of love.

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## LECTURE XXV.

1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 4-13. *April 25, 1852.*

It is a notable circumstance that the most elaborate description given in Scripture of the grace of Charity is from the pen, not of St. John, who was pre-eminently the man of love, but of the Apostle Paul, whose great characteristic was his soaring faith.

To each of the Apostles was given a peculiar work; each had one feature in his character predominant over the rest. If we had been asked what this was in St. Paul, we should have said Faith; for he has assigned to faith that high position which makes it the efficacious instrument in justifying the soul. St. John, on the contrary, was the Apostle of Love. To him we owe the pregnant expressions, "God is love," "Little children, love one another," "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him." And yet it was not to him that the office was assigned of illustrating and expounding his own especial grace, but to one of a very different character—one in whom the man-like predominated over the woman-like; a man daring, impetuous, intellectual; one in whom all the qualities of the man strongly flourished, and who yet emphatically declares all those—faith, great strength, intellect, gifts, manliness—to be inferior to love.

There are some very intelligible reasons for this arrangement in God's providential dealings. If the Apostle Paul had exalted the grace of faith only, and St. John that of love only, we might have conceived that each magnified especially his own gift, and that his judgment was guided by his peculiarities of temperament. But when the gifted apostle, at the same time that he acknowledges the worth of talents, counts them as nothing in comparison of love, no doubt remains. It is as if he would show that the graces of the Christian character may be mixed in different proportions, but must *all* be found in every one who lives the life of Christ. For no man can conquer the world, except by faith: no man can resemble God, except by love. It was by faith that St. Paul removed mountains of impossibility; it was by love that he became like God.



Our subject, then, is charity: we will consider two points:

I. Its description.

II. The reason of its superiority to gifts.

I. The description of this grace is contained in the fourth to the seventh verses. This description is needed, because no single word in any language will express the fullness of the Christian grace here spoken of. Charity is by conventional usage appropriated to one particular form—almsgiving, and we can not use the term without thinking of this. Love is appropriated to another human feeling, given by God as one of the means whereby we are freed from self, but which in its highest forms is too personal and too exclusive to be the Christian grace; in its lowest forms, too earthly. To the Greeks the world was saturated with this earthly idea of love, and it needed this elaborate description to purge from their minds the thoughts connected with it.

Benevolence or philanthropy is somewhat nearer, but still insufficient to be what St. Paul meant. Benevolence is too often merely passive, too often merely instinctive: a sentiment, and nothing more. Besides, many a man is actively benevolent, charitable among the poor, full of schemes and plans for the benefit of others, and yet utterly deficient in that religious sense which accompanies the Christian grace of love. Therefore St. Paul gives this exquisite description of what he means by the word, distinguishing it from almsgiving, passion, sentiment, and philanthropy, while something of them all is contained within it.

Upon this description I make two remarks.

1. Observe that many of those qualities which the apostle names as characteristic of charity are what we should assign to other graces; for example, patience, "She suffereth long, and is kind;" generosity, "She envieth not;" humility, "She vaunteth not herself;" dignified demeanor, "Doth not behave itself unseemly;" peaceableness, "She seeketh not her own;" good-temper, "She is not easily provoked;" innocence and unsuspectingness, "She thinketh no evil;" love of realities, "She rejoiceth in the truth." For St. Paul saw down to the root; he saw that it was perfectly possible for any one of these to exist alone, but it was in the co-existence of them all that the real life of the under-root of love was shown.

For example, you may find a man rejoicing in the truth, and generous—nay, good-tempered, too; but there is in his deportment a certain restlessness, a want of ease, and a desire to eclipse others: the apostle would describe him as behaving himself unseemly. Well, then, he *is* good-tempered,

he *is* generous, but he lacks charity, which pervades every grace, coloring them all, as our life gives hues to the hair, the lips, and the eyes. For real love would have made him shrink from giving pain by showing superiority. In his desire to appear better than others, self is uppermost, whereas Love is the abnegation and forgetfulness of self.

2. I make another remark; for you will observe only general remarks can be made: complete exposition is out of the question: every one of these sentences might furnish matter for a sermon. Besides, to illustrate or improve this description would be "to gild refined gold;" gold thrice refined in the eloquence and heart of St. Paul.

The second remark I make is, that the apostle here describes a Christian gentleman. There is a thing which we call high-breeding or courtesy: its name proclaims that it is the manners of the Court, and it is supposed to belong exclusively to persons highly born. There is another thing which we call Christian courtesy: the difference between the two is, that high-breeding gracefully insists upon its own rights; Christian courtesy gracefully remembers the rights of others. In the narrow, limited sense of the word, "gentlemen" can only be applicable to persons born in a certain class, and "gentle" is only the old English word for "genteel;" but in the larger, higher meaning, it belongs to those who are gentle in character rather than in blood; and just as "gentle" has been corrupted into "genteel," so the words "gentleman," "courtesy," "politeness," have come to be considered the exclusive property of one class.

The Spirit of Christ does *really* what high-breeding only does outwardly. A high-bred man never forgets himself, controls his temper, does nothing in excess, is urbane, dignified, and that even to persons whom he is inwardly cursing in his heart, or wishing far away. But a Christian *is* what the world *seems* to be. Love gives him a delicate tact which never offends, because it is full of sympathy. It discerns far off what would hurt fastidious feelings, feels with others, and is ever on the watch to anticipate their thoughts. And hence the only true, deep refinement—that which lies not on the surface, but goes deep down into the character—comes from Christian love.

And hence, too, we understand what is meant by elevating and refining the poorer classes. My brethren, Christianity desires to make them all gentlemen. Do not be alarmed! for it is not in the world's sense of the word, nor in the socialistic, but only in the Christian meaning, that we would see them all refined. And assuredly, if Christian charity

were universal, if every man were his brother's teacher, a rude clown, or unmannered peasant, or coarse-minded workman, could not be met with. But these, you say, are only dreams, and that it is absurd to expect or aim at the refinement of the working-classes. Tell me, then, is it equally absurd to expect that they may become Christian? And if they are Christian, can they be so far unrefined? Only read this description of Christian charity, and conceive it existing in a peasant's breast. Could he be uncourteous, rude, selfish, and inconsiderate of the feelings, opinions, and thoughts of those around him? "If he did not behave himself unseemly, if he suffered long and was kind, or was not easily provoked, but bore all things quietly," would he not be a gentleman in heart?

II. We come to the reasons for the superiority of Christian love to the gifts spoken of in the last chapter.

1. Its permanence: "Charity never faileth."

In contrast with this, St. Paul shows the temporary character of those marvellous gifts which we find mentioned in the eighth verse: Charity endures, but prophecy, tongues, and knowledge "fail." But let us take them in the modern, and not in the miraculous sense; for what the Corinthians got by miracle, we now obtain by the persevering use of our natural faculties. Prophecy means the power of interpreting Scripture. This doubtless is a precious gift, but only valuable as means to an end; and when that is attained, the preciousness of the gift immediately ceases. "A time will come when they shall not teach every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, but all shall know Him from the least to the greatest." All those qualifications which go to make up the character of the expounder of Scripture, such as eloquence, critical knowledge, biblical lore, what are they? They are only designed for time, and soon they shall be obsolete.

Tongues also, of which the apostle here speaks, shall "fail"—that is, pass away. They were then miraculous. What they were we shall explain in the approaching lecture: now, however, they are naturally acquired. It is remarked that this faculty gives more cause for vanity than any other. He who knows two languages is able to express his thoughts to two persons: this is very valuable, but it is not necessarily a double means of thought. And yet we see that the expert linguist is generally found more proud of his gifts, and more vain, than the deep thinker and knower: so with the Corinthians, this gift produced more vanity than the more useful ones of prophecy and teaching.

And yet suppose a man had known fifty languages in the days of St. Paul, how many—or rather how few—would be of use now? The dialects of “Parthia, Media, of the Elamite, of Mesopotamia, Judæa, and Cappadocia,” they are now all obsolete: “Whether there be tongues, they shall cease.” And knowledge also “shall vanish away,” for it is but a temporary state of the human mind. For instance, that of the physician, which arises out of the existence of disease: were there no disease, his knowledge would disappear. And it is the same with “gifts of healing:” when the time comes in which “they shall hunger no more, and thirst no more,” when sickness and death shall cease, this power shall be needless. And so also with the knowledge of the lawyer, which depends on human crime: were there no wrongs done to persons or property, the necessity of legal knowledge would be at an end. All the knowledge hived in centuries by the barrister and the judge will vanish when Christianity reigns upon earth.

Again, we see the same with science, which is ever shifting and becoming obsolete. The science of St. Paul’s day, the deep philosophy of the Greek, is only curious now; for a brighter light has shone, and the geography, the astronomy, and the physics of that age have vanished. And this is surely reason enough to make a man humble; for if time so deals with the man of profoundest science, if in a few years his knowledge can not suffice the school-boy, what must be the humbleness due from us, who know so little? Therefore, the next time you are inclined to be vain of a few facts, or a little reading, or a smattering of science, pause and think, that all the knowledge of the great and wise men of the Apostle Paul’s day, except the knowledge of Christ crucified, is worthless now. All they knew has vanished, all has failed but this, that they “washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

2. The second reason is the completeness of Christian love. Gifts, knowledge, tongues, are only means towards an end. Love remains the completion and perfection of our human being, just as stem, flower, bud, and leaf in the tree are all subservient to the fruit.

St. Paul uses two illustrations to make this plain. “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

In the first, the apostle evidently considers our human ex-

istence as progressive; and just what childhood is to manhood, the most advanced manhood is to our heavenly being. We put away childish things in manhood; we shall put away even manly or human things entirely in the spiritual state. In childhood, there is an ignorance which fancies itself knowledge, there is a selfishness which does not own the wants of others, there is a slavery to present impulses; but when age has taught us how little we know, has taught us that if society is to exist at all we must give up some of our selfishness, and has taught us prudence, then manhood puts away the things of a child.

And so, similarly, there are many things now which subserve a high purpose, but do not belong to the highest state. For instance, ambition, the last infirmity of noble minds; what a spur it is to exertion! how deadening to sloth! And if you were to quench it altogether, how few of the present noble works would be done! Again, patriotism is a virtue, but not the highest; you could not dispense with it. Our Master felt it when on earth: He was a Jew, and felt deeply for His country. But when we enter into that clime where there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, then patriotism shall pass away.

Consider, also, friendship, and other particular attachments. But these are no substitutes for the charity which contemplates likeness to Christ, rather than personal affinities. While on earth Christ had personal attachments; a strong human affection for St. John, from their mutual similarities of character. But observe His Divine charity: he said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" And then pointing to His disciples—Behold them: "For, whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." These things are manly and human now, but will have to be put away then: patriotism, ambition, exclusive friendship, will then disappear, and be succeeded by higher impulses.

The last comparison is to imperfect vision as contrasted with perfect: "Now we see through a glass, darkly." Glass in this place more properly means window, for the ancient windows were made of horn, or talc, or thin metal, through which things were seen but in a dim, confused, and colorless manner. So now we see Divine things "darkly." We see God through the colored glass, as it were, of our own limited human impressions. "The Father" has scarcely even all the poor conceptions we have gained from the earthly relationship from which the name is borrowed. And God, as "Love," is seen by us only as one who loves as we love—

weakly, partially, selfishly. Heaven, also, is but a place erected by our earthly imagination. To the Indian, a hunting-ground; to the old Norseman, a battle banquet; to the Mohammedan, a place of earthly rapture; to the man of science, a place where Nature shall yield up all her secrets. "We see through a glass darkly: we know but in part." But just what the going out of a room lighted through horn windows into the clear daylight would be to us now, will be the entrance of the purified spirit into God's realities out of this world of shadows — of things half seen — of restless dreams. "It doth not yet appear," says St. John, "what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

Here, therefore, we bring the subject to a conclusion. All gifts are to be cultivated; let no Christian despise them. Every accomplishment, every intellectual faculty that can adorn and grace human nature, should be cultivated and polished to its highest capability. Yet these are not the things that bring us nearer God. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."

You may have strong, eagle-eyed faith: well—you will probably be enabled to do great things in life, to work wonders, to trample on impossibilities. You may have sanguine hope: well—your life will pass brightly, not gloomily. But the vision of God as He is, to see the King in His beauty, is vouchsafed not to science nor to talent, but only to purity and love.

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## LECTURE XXVI.

1 CORINTHIANS xiv. 1-24. *May 2, 1852.*

THE first verse of this chapter contains a *résumé* of all that has been said in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters, and serves as a point from whence the fourteenth chapter begins. And we observe that charity holds the first place, and then spiritual gifts follow in the second. And of spiritual gifts, some for certain reasons—as, for instance, prophecy—are preferable to others. And this is exactly the subject of these three last chapters. St. Paul says, graces, like charity, are superior to gifts: "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." We will consider why is prophecy preferable?

It will be necessary, in order to explain this, to define what we mean, and to show the difference between a grace and a gift. A grace does not differ from a gift in this, that the former is from God, and the latter from nature. As a creative power, there is no such thing as nature: all is God's. A grace is that which has in it some moral quality; whereas a gift does not necessarily share in this. Charity implies a certain character; but a gift, as, for instance, that of tongues, does not. A man may be fluent, learned, skillful, and be a good man likewise; another may have the same powers, and yet be a bad man—proud, mean, or obstinate. Now this distinction explains at once why graces are preferable.

Graces are what the man *is*; but enumerate his gifts, and you will only know what he *has*. He *is* loving; he *has* eloquence, or medical skill, or legal knowledge, or the gift of acquiring languages, or that of healing. You only have to cut out his tongue, or to impair his memory, and the gift is gone. But, on the contrary, you must destroy his very being, change him into another man, and obliterate his identity, before he ceases to be a loving man. Therefore you may contemplate the gift separate from the man; and whilst you admire it, you may despise him; as many a gifted man is contemptible through being a slave to low vices or to his own high gifts. But you can not contemplate the grace separate from the man: *he* is lovable or admirable, according as he has charity, faith, or self-control.

And hence the apostle bids the Corinthians undervalue gifts in comparison with graces: "Follow after charity." But as to gifts, they are not ourselves, but our accidents, like property, ancestors, birth, or position in the world.

But hence also, on the other hand, arises the reason for our due admiration of gifts: "Desire spiritual gifts."

Many religious persons go into the contrary extreme: they call gifts dangerous, ignore them, sneer at them, and say they are "of the world." No, says the apostle, "desire" them: look them in the face, as goods: not the highest goods, but still desirable, like wealth or health. Only remember, you are not worthy or good because of them. And remember other people are not bound to honor you for them. Admire a Napoleon's genius: do not despise it: but do not let your admiration of that induce you to give honor to the man. Let there be no mere "hero-worship"—that false modern spirit which recognizes the "force that is in a man" as the only thing worthy of homage. The subject of this 14th chapter is—not the principle on which graces are preferable to gifts, but the principle on which one gift is preferable to

another. "Rather that ye may prophesy." Now the principle of this preference is very briefly stated. Of gifts, St. Paul prefers those which are useful to those that are showy. The gift of prophecy was useful to others, whilst that of tongues was only a luxury for self. Now the principle of this preference is stated generally in the 12th verse: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church."

We come, therefore, to-day to the exposition of a chapter confessedly of extreme difficulty, a chapter on prophecy and the gift of tongues. It was from a strange and wild misinterpretation of this chapter, untenable on any sound grounds of interpretation, that the great and gifted Irving fell into such fatal error.

For some reasons it might be well to omit this chapter altogether; in simple modesty for one, since I can not but feel diffident of entering upon ground where so many have slipped and fallen. But this would be contrary to the principle I have laid down, of endeavoring with straightforwardness and simplicity to expound the whole counsel of God.

I must ask you to bear with me while endeavoring to expound this extremely difficult question. There is no minister of the Church of England who can pretend to a power of infallible interpretation. I give you the result of patient study and much thought. Let those who are tempted to despise flippantly first qualify themselves for an opinion by similar prayerful study.

To-day we shall exclusively direct our attention to acquiring a clear view of what the prophecy was which the apostle preferred to tongues, as this will of course be necessary, before we can proceed to apply his principle of preference to our own day.

#### 1. What was prophecy?

In these days, when we use the word prophet, we mean it almost always to signify a predictor of future events. But in the Old Testament it has this meaning only *sometimes*, whilst in the New Testament *generally* it has not this interpretation. A prophet was one commissioned to declare the will of God—a revealer of truth; it might be of facts future, or the far higher truth of the meaning of facts present.

Hence in the 3d verse, "He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." Here, then, is the essence of the prophet's office, but there is not one word spoken here of prediction. We can imagine that it might have been necessary, in order fully to expound a spiritual principle, or a principle of divine politics, to foretell



the result of transgression against it; as when the Captivity, or the fate of Babylon and Nineveh, was predicted; but this was not the essence of the prophet's duty: the essence of his duty was to reveal truth.

Again, in the 24th verse, the exercise of this gift is spoken of as one specially instrumental in the conversion of unbelievers: "If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all." Observe here, prediction has nothing to do with the matter; for before a prediction *could* be fulfilled, the unbeliever "falls down, acknowledges God," and reports that "God is in you of a truth." Moreover, the prophecy was something which touched his conscience, read his very soul, interpreted the secrets of his heart: "He is convinced of all."

And this surely makes the question sufficiently plain for all practical purposes. Prophecy was a gift eminently useful: it was the power of expounding the will and the word of God. And for us to embrace the essence of the matter, it does not signify whether it is, as it was then, a gift miraculous, or as it is now, a gift slowly improved. The deep insight into truth, the happy faculty of imparting truth: these two endowments together made up that which was essential to the prophet of the early Church.

II. We pass on now to a subject much more difficult: what is meant by the gift of tongues.

From the account given in the second chapter of Acts, in which "Parthians, Medes, the dwellers in Mesopotamia," and various others, said of those who had the gift of tongues that they spoke so that the multitude "heard every man in his own tongue wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God;" it is generally taken for granted that it was a miraculous gift of speaking foreign languages, and that the object of such a gift was the conversion of the heathen world. After a long and patient examination of the subject, I humbly doubt this altogether, and I do not think that it is tenable for ten minutes of fair discussion. I believe that the gift was a far higher one than that of the linguist.

And first for this reason, amongst others, that St. Paul prefers prophecy to the gift of "tongues" because of its being more useful, since prophecy edified others, and tongues did not. Now could he have said this had the gift been the power of speaking foreign languages? Was there no tendency to edification—no profitableness in a gift which would have so marvellously facilitated preaching to the nations of

the world? We will proceed to collect the hints given of the effects of the gift, and of the gift itself, which are to be found in this chapter. We gather first that the "tongues" were inarticulate or incoherent: in the second verse it is said, "No man understandeth him." And lest you should say this is just what would be true of foreign languages, observe that the tongues spoken of were rather of the nature of an impassioned utterance of devotional feeling, than of preaching intended to be understood. The man spoke with tongues—"Not unto men, but unto God." And what is this but that rapt, ecstatic outpouring of unutterable feeling, for which language is insufficient and poor, in which a man is not trying to make himself logically clear to men, but pouring out his soul to God?

Again, in the 4th verse: "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself." Here we find another characteristic point given: this gift was something internal, a kind of inspired and impassioned soliloquy, or it may be meditation uttered aloud. There was an unconscious need of expressing audibly the feelings arising within; but when so uttered, they merely ended, as the apostle says, in "edifying" the person who uttered them. May I, without profaneness, compare these utterances, by way of illustration, to the broken murmur with which a poet full of deep thought might be supposed, in solitude, or in unconsciousness of the presence of others, to put his feelings into incoherent, muttered words? What would this be but an exercise of feeling irrepressible, bursting into utterance for relief, and so edifying itself!

Once again, in the 7th and 8th verses: "And even things without life, giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"—where the apostle proceeds to compare the gift of "tongues" with the unworded and inarticulate sounds of musical instruments. These *have* a meaning. St. Paul does not say they have none, but he says that, not being definite, they are unintelligible, except to a person in sympathy with the same mood of feeling as that of him who plays the pipe or trumpet. And although they *have* a meaning, it is one which is *felt* rather than measured by the intellect. To the mere understanding musical sounds signify nothing. The mathematician would ask, "What does that prove?" the historian would say, "Tell us what information or fact does it communicate." So also we see that one speaking with "tongues" would leave on most people a vague, indefinite impression, as of a wild,

rude melody—the utterance of feelings felt to be infinite, and incapable of being put into words.

Have you ever heard the low moanings of hopelessness? or those airs which to us are harsh and unmelodious, but which to the Swiss mountaineer tell of home, bringing him back to the scenes of his childhood: speaking to him in a language clearer than the tongue? or have you ever listened to the merry, unmeaning shouts of boyhood, getting rid of exuberance of life, uttering in sound a joy which boyhood only knows, and for which manhood has no words? Well, in all these you have dim illustrations of the way in which new feelings, deep feelings, irrepressible feelings, found for themselves utterance in sounds which were called “tongues.”

Again, they are spoken of in another way in the 23d verse: “If, therefore, the whole Church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and others come in there that are unlearned and unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?” Thus the sound of these utterances of strong feeling when unrepressed, and *weakly* allowed full vent, was like the ravings of insanity. So indeed men did imagine on the day of Pentecost: “Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.” Remember it was a great part of the apostle’s object in this chapter to remind the Corinthians that they were bound to *control* this power; else it would degenerate into mere imbecility or fanaticism. Feeling is a precious gift; but when men parade it, exhibit it, and give way to it, it is weakness instead of strength.

Lastly, let us consider the 11th verse: “Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.” Here the gift is compared to a barbarian tongue, to a man speaking what the hearer knew not. Therefore we see that it is *not a barbarian tongue* itself which is here intended, but merely that the indefinable language uttered is *likened* to one.

Here, however, we arrive at a most important peculiarity in this gift. From the 13th verse we learn that it could be interpreted. And without this interpretation the “tongues” were obviously useless. The gift might be a personal indulgence and luxury, but to the world it was valueless: as in the 14th verse, “My spirit prayeth, but my understanding remaineth unfruitful.” Now, if it had been a foreign language, it would have been simply necessary that the interpreter should be a native of the country where the language was spoken. But here the power of interpretation is reckoned a spiritual gift from God as much as the power of tongues; a

gift granted in answer to prayer. "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

Now this we shall best understand by analogies. It is a great principle that all the deeper feelings can only be comprehended by one who is in the same state of feeling as the person who utters, or attempts to utter them. Sympathy is the only condition for interpretation of feeling. Take the apostle's own illustration: he compares the gift of tongues to music. Now music needs an interpreter, and the interpretation must be given, not in words, but in corresponding feelings. There must be "music in the soul" as the condition of understanding harmony; to him who has not this, the *language* of music is simply unintelligible. None but one of kindred spirit with the sweet singer of Israel could interpret the melodies of David: others, who felt not with him, said, as of the prophet of old, "Doth he not speak parables?"

Take another instance where the feelings need interpretation. A child is often the subject of feelings which he does not understand: observe how he is affected by the reading of a tale or a moving hymn: he will not say, How touching, how well imagined! but he will hide his face, or he hums, or laughs, or becomes peevish, because he does not know what is the matter with him. He is ashamed of sensations which he does not understand. He has no words, like a man, to express his new feelings. One not understanding him would say it was caprice and ill behavior. But the grown man can interpret them; and sympathizing with the child, he says, "The child can not contain his feelings."

Or take the instance of a physician finding words for physical feelings, because he understands them better than the patient who is unable to express them. In the same way the early Christians, being the subjects of new, deep, and spiritual feeling, declared their joy, their aspiration, their ecstatic devotion, in inarticulate utterances. They felt truths, which were just as true and deep to them as when articulately expressed. But the drawing out of those emotions into words, the explaining what they felt, and what their hurried, huddled words unconsciously meant, that was the office of the interpreter. For example, a stranger might have been at a loss to know what was really meant. "Are you happy or miserable, O Christian, by those wild utterances? Is it madness, or new wine, or inspiration?" And none but a person in the same mood of mind, or one who had passed through that mood and understood it by the unerring tact of sympathy, could say to the stranger, "This is the

overflow of gratefulness: he is blessing in the Spirit: it is a hymn of joy that his heart is singing to itself;" or, "It is a burst of prayer." And therefore St. Paul writes the 15th, 16th, and 17th verses, which contain the very points I have mentioned, "praying," "singing," "blessing," and "giving of thanks." It seems to me that the early Christians were the subjects of feelings too deep to be put into words.

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## LECTURE XXVII.

1 CORINTHIANS xiv. 25-40. *May 9, 1852.*

WE were occupied last Sunday in endeavoring to ascertain merely what the gifts of prophecy and tongues were.

Prophecy we found to be, in its essence, the faculty of comforting, exhorting, etc., by spiritual truths addressed to the understanding. The prophet had the gift of insight, and also the power of explaining the meaning of truth. Collecting the information scattered through the chapter respecting "Tongues," we found that while under their influence men spoke incoherently and unintelligibly (ver. 2); in a soliloquy edifying self (ver. 4); they are compared with the sound of inarticulate musical instruments (ver. 7); to barbarian tongues (ver. 11); to ravings of insanity (ver. 23); as capable of interpretation by persons spiritually gifted, in spite of their incoherency and inarticulateness (ver. 13).

Putting all this together, we concluded that new intense feelings from the Holy Spirit were uttered incoherently, not in some foreign language, but in each man's own language—in broken sentences, which were unintelligible to all, except to those who, by sympathy and a corresponding spiritual state, were able to interpret, and say whether they expressed unutterable joy or blessing, or giving thanks, or devotion.

In like manner we saw that the sound of the Alpine horn, the awkward attempts of a child, when affected by a moving anecdote, to conceal his feelings, boyish joy intoxicated with happiness, though they appear to be meaningless, yet have deep significance for those who are in sympathy with them. Or again, thanks uttered by any one overpowered by feeling—how incoherent! yet how much better than wordy, fluent sententiousness! Abraham's laugh, for example—it was a strange tongue in which to express happiness: who could fairly interpret that and say it was intense joy? It was not irreverence or unbelief in David dancing before the Ark.

What was it but the human utterance of Divine joy? Consider, again, Elisha's silent sorrow. "Knowest thou," said the sons of the prophets, unable to interpret the apparent apathy of his silence, "that the Lord will take away the light of Israel?" Observe how a sympathetic spirit was needed: silence had been better in them. "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace." His silence had a language of its own; it was a tongue of grief, which needed interpretation from the heart.

We will now consider the nature of spiritual gifts, and also some directions for their use.

The New Testament speaks much of spiritual gifts. Thus St. Paul says, in his Epistle to the Romans, "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established." Let us distinctly understand what a "spiritual gift" is. It means the faculty in each man in which the Holy Spirit reveals Himself. Every man has some such, in which his chief force lies: this is a gift. Well, this, either then exhibited for the first time in a visible, perceptible effect, or some old power sanctified and elevated, was called a spiritual gift. For it did not matter that it was a natural gift or power; provided only that the spiritual life in the man raised it and ennobled it, it then became a spiritual gift.

There are certain epochs in the world's history which may be called creative epochs, when intense feelings elevate all the powers preternaturally. Such, for example, was the close of the last century, when the revolutionary spirit of the age manifested itself in the creation of an almost preternatural abundance of military talent.

The first age of Christianity was emphatically such an epoch. The Holy Spirit was poured out largely, and under its influence mind and body were transfigured—whatever It touched, It vivified: as when a person was healed, and "his ankle-bones received strength." Thus we learn that the Holy Ghost may mingle with man in three ways—with his body, and then you have what is called a miracle; with his spirit, and then you have that exalted feeling which finds vent in what is called "Tongues;" or with his intellect, and then you have prophecy. In the case of tongues, men *felt*, and could not logically express feeling, as "groanings which can not be uttered," or especial illumination of the uneducated.

In the case of prophecy, cultivated minds were themselves able to develop in consecutive words, by the understanding to the understanding, what the Spirit meant. But the es-

sential in all this was the Divine element of life. The gift was not independent of life: just as when a flood of rain falls on dry and thirsty ground, and the result is greenness and vigor in the plants—greenness and vigor not being gifts, but simply the outward manifestation of invisible life—so the new life penetrated the whole man, and gave force to every faculty.

Consider what this gift of prophecy must have done in developing the Christian Church! Men came into Christian assemblies for once, and were astonished by the flood of luminous and irresistible truth which passed from the prophetic lips: it became an instrument of conversion; but in the “Tongues” the clear understanding vanished into ecstasy: the utterer, unless he controlled them, was carried away by his feelings.

For this was not an address, nor an exhortation, nor exactly a prayer: utterly indifferent to the presence of others, the man was occupied only with God and his own soul. Consider St. Paul’s ecstasy when he was caught up into the third heaven; yet even this he deprecates as comparatively worthless. That state, if not under control, would have produced “tongues.” Hence “tongues” is a plural term, for there were different kinds of utterance by different feelings, innumerable phases of feeling, innumerable modes of utterance.

In the 29th verse, St. Paul gives a direction concerning prophecy, from which we learn that private inspiration was always to be judged by the general inspiration—*i. e.*, it was not to be taken for granted because spoken—had this simple rule been attended to, how much fanaticism would have been prevented! We must remember that inspiration is one thing, infallibility is another. God the Holy Ghost, as a sanctifying Spirit, dwells in human beings with partial sin; is it inconceivable that God, the inspiring Spirit, should dwell with partial error? Did He not do so, He could not dwell with man at all. Therefore St. Paul says that the spirits of the prophets are to be subject to the prophets. Neglect of this has been a fruitful cause of fanaticism. From the 32d verse we learn the responsibility attaching to every possessor of gifts; it is a duty to rule—that is, to control—his gift. For inspiration might be abused: this is the great lesson of the passage; the *afflatus* was not irresistible; a man was not to be borne away by his gift, but to be master of it, and responsible for it. The prophets were not mere trumpets, *forced* to utter rightly what God said.

The first direction respecting “tongues” was repression

of feeling in public. It is plain that what the apostle dreaded was self-deception and enthusiasm. This state of ecstasy was so pleasurable, and the admiration awarded to it so easy to be procured, that it became the object of anxious pursuit to numbers, who, instead of steady well-doing, spent life in exhibiting intense feeling, or "showing off." Now this, in its essence, is not confined to Christian souls. "Enthusiasm" means "possessed by the god"—a heathen word used of the Pythonesses, or of frantic devotees; for there is a bad as well as a fine frenzy. And the camp-meetings in America, and the convulsions of the Ranters, all bear testimony to the same truth: how uncontrolled religious feeling may overpower reason and sense—mere natural and animal feeling mingling itself with the movements of Divine life.

There is great danger in ungoverned feeling. There are persons more highly gifted with fine delicate sensibilities than others; they are not moved to action, like others, by convictions of the intellect or by a strong sense of duty: they can do nothing except through their affections. All this is very precious, no doubt, if well used; but just in proportion as feelings are strong do they require discipline. The temptation is great to indulge from mere pleasure of indulgence, and from the admiration given to feeling. It is easier to gain credit for goodness by a glistening eye, while listening to some story of self-sacrifice, than by patient usefulness. It is easier to get credit for spirituality by thrilling at some impassioned speech on the platform or sermon from the pulpit, than by living a life of justice, mercy, and truth. And hence religious life degenerates into mere indulgence of feeling, the excitement of religious meetings, or the *utterance* of strong emotion. In this sickly strife, life wastes away, and the man or woman becomes weak instead of strong; for invariably utterance weakens feeling.

What a lesson! These divine high feelings in the Church of Corinth—to what had they degenerated! Loud, tumultuous, disorderly cries; such that a stranger coming in would pronounce of the speakers that they were mad!

The second direction respecting tongues is, "Forbid not to speak with tongues." See the inspired wisdom of the apostle's teaching! A common man would have said, "All this is wild fanaticism; away with it!" St. Paul said, "It is not *all* fanaticism: part is true, part is error." The true is God's Spirit; the false is the admixture of human emotion, vanity, and turbid excitement. A similar wise distinction we find in that expression, "Be not drunk with wine, but be ye filled with the Spirit." He implies there are two



kinds of excitement—one pure, one impure; one proceeding from a higher state of being, the other from one lower; which yet resemble each other—intoxication with wine, or with spiritual joy; and both are capable of abuse. They are alike in this, that in both the senses and the conscious will may be mastered.

The lesson, therefore, from this second requirement is to learn to sympathize with deep feeling; believe that it *has* a meaning, though you may not have experienced it. Sympathy is needful in order rightly to understand the higher feelings. There are cold, intellectual men, afraid of enthusiasm, who frown on and forbid every manifestation of feeling: they will talk of the elocution of Isaiah or the logic of St. Paul, and they think to fathom the meaning of Scripture by grammatical criticism; whereas only the Spirit can interpret the Spirit. You must get into the same region of feeling in which prophets breathe, and then only can you understand them.

The third apostolic direction is to prefer gifts which are useful to others, rather than those which are brilliant and draw admiration to ourselves. And yet *we* pique and pride ourselves on gifts which make us unapproachable, and raise us above the crowd of men in solitary superiority. For example: it is a great thing to be an astronomer, reading the laws of the universe; yet an astronomer might be cold, heartless, atheistical, looking down with profound scorn on the vulgar herd. Still, I suppose few would not rather be the astronomer with whose name Europe now rings, than an obscure country surgeon, attending to and soothing the sufferings of peasants; there are few who would not rather be the gifted singer at whose strains breathless multitudes melt into tears, than some nurse of an hospital soothing pain, or a Dorcas making garments for the poor. Tell me, which would he have preferred, who, gifted above all other men with inspired wisdom and sublime feelings, yet said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all; yet in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue?"

It is better to be useful than brilliant. You do not think so? Well, then, your heart does not beat to the same music which regulated the pulses of the Apostle Paul.

Lastly, I infer the real union of the human race lies in oneness of heart. Consider what this gift was: it was not a gift of foreign languages; a Corinthian Greek might be speaking in the Spirit in the Church, and another Greek might not un-

derstand him ; but a Roman or a Mesopotamian might understand him, though he spoke the Greek language ; and this not by a gift of language, but by a gift of sympathy. Had it been a gift of foreign tongues, it would have only perpetuated the Babel confusion ; but being a gift of the Spirit, it neutralized that confusion. The world is craving for unity ; this is the distinct, conscious longing of our age. It may be that centuries shall pass before this unity comes. Still it is something to be on the right track ; it is something to know *what* we are to cultivate in order to make it come, and what we are to avoid.

Now some expect this by uniformity of customs, ecclesiastical rites and dress ; let us, they say, have the same services, the same hours, the same Liturgies, and we shall be one. Others expect it through oneness of language. Philosophers speculate on the probability of one language, perhaps the English, predominating. They see the vast American and Australian continents—the New Worlds—speaking this, while other languages are only learned as polite accomplishments. Hence they hope that a time is coming when nations shall understand each other perfectly, and be one.

Christianity casts aside all these plans and speculations as utterly insufficient. It does not look to political economy, to ecclesiastical drill, nor to the absorption of all languages into one ; but it looks to the eternal Spirit of God, which proceeds from the eternal Son, the man Christ Jesus. One heart, and then many languages will be no barrier. One spirit, and man will understand man.

As an application, at this time, we will consider one thing only. There are gifts which draw admiration to a man's self, others which solace and soothe him personally, and a third class which benefit others. The World and the Bible are at issue on the comparative worth of these. A gifted singer soon makes a fortune, and men give their guinea and their ten guineas ungrudgingly for a morning's enjoyment. An humble teacher in a school, or a missionary, can often but only just live. Gifts that are showy and gifts that please—before these the World yields her homage, while the lowly teachers of the poor and the ignorant are forgotten and unnoticed. Only remember that, in the sight of the Everlasting Eye, the one is creating sounds which perish with the hour that gave them birth, the other is doing a work that is forever—building and forming for the eternal world an immortal human spirit.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 1-12. *May 30, 1852.*

IN the regular course of our Sunday afternoon Expositions we are now arrived at the fifteenth chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. We are all aware that this is the chapter selected by our Church to be read at the Funeral Service, and to almost all of us every syllable stands associated in our memory with some sad and mournful moment in our lives; when every word, as it fell from the lips of the minister, seemed like the knell of death to our hearts. This is one reason why the exposition of this chapter is attended with some difficulty. For we have been so little accustomed to look upon it as consisting of argument and doctrine, and it has been, by long and solemn associations, so hallowed in our memories, that it sounds more like stately music heard in the stillness of night than like an argument; and to separate it into parts, to break it up into fragments, appears to us to be almost a profanation, even though it be for the purpose of exposition.

The whole of this chapter is occupied with the proof of the doctrine of the Resurrection. On the present occasion, however, we confine ourselves to the first twelve verses. This subject, like almost all the others treated of in this Epistle, had been forced upon the apostle in consequence of certain errors and heresies which had crept into the Corinthian Church. That Church presented a singular spectacle—that of a Christian body, large numbers of which denied the doctrine of the Resurrection, who, notwithstanding, were still reckoned by St. Paul as not having forfeited their Christianity. The first thing we learn from this is, the great difference made by the apostle between moral wrong-doing and intellectual error. For we have found in an earlier chapter, when in this same Church the crime of incest had been committed by one of its members, the apostle at once commanded that they should separate the guilty person from their communion; but here, although some had fallen into error upon one of the cardinal doctrines of the Church, the apostle does not excommunicate them, nor does he hold that they have forfeited their Christian profession. They are wrong, greatly

wrong, but still he expostulates with them, and endeavors to set them right.

Let us examine this a little further. In the present day, disbelief of the doctrine of the Resurrection is almost equivalent to the deepest infidelity. A man who doubts, or openly denies, the doctrine of a life to come, is a man we can in no case call a Christian. But there is a vast difference between this doubt as expressed in the time of the apostle and in the present day. In the present day this denial arises out of materialism. That is, there are men who believe that life and soul and spirit are merely the phenomena resulting from the juxtaposition of certain particles of matter. Place these particles in a certain position, they say, and the result will be motion, or electricity—call it what you will; place them in another position, and there will follow those phenomena which we call life, or those which we call spirit; and then separate those particles, and all the phenomena will cease, and this is the condition which we term death.

Now the unbelief of those distant ages was something very different from this. It was not materialism, but an ultra-spiritualism, which led the Corinthians into error. They denied the resurrection of the body, because they believed that the matter of which that body was composed was the cause of all evil; and they hailed the Gospel as the brightest boon ever given to men, chiefly because it gave them the hope of being liberated from the flesh with its corrupt desires. They looked upon the resurrection taught by the apostle as if it were merely a figurative expression. They said, "Just as out of the depth of winter spring rises into glory, so, figuratively speaking, you may say there is a resurrection of the soul when it rises above the flesh and the carnal desires of nature. *That* is the resurrection; beyond it there is none."

On examining the Epistles of St. Paul, we find many traces of the prevalence of such doctrine. So, for instance, in one place we find the apostle speaking in condemnation of some "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection was past already." That is, as we have said, they thought that the only resurrection was the regeneration of society. And again, in the beginning of his Second Epistle to this same Church, we read: "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." That is, in opposition to this erroneous doctrine, the apostle taught that that which the Christian desires is not merely to be separated from the body, or, in their language, to be "unclothed," but something higher far, to be

“clothed upon;” not the destruction or transition merely of our desires and appetites, but the enlarging and ennobling these into a higher and better life. In this chapter the apostle sets himself to controvert this erroneous notion. And he does it by a twofold line of argument; first, by historical proofs of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and afterwards by a demonstration of the absurdity of the denial of this truth.

I. In the first place, by historical proofs of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. These are contained in the earlier verses, from the fourth to the end of the eighth, where he shows that Christ was seen, after His resurrection, by Cephas, then by the twelve; after that by above five hundred brethren at once; and, last of all, by himself also, “as of one born out of due time.” The first thing here which the apostle has to do is to set at rest at once and forever the question of *what* was the apostolic doctrine. For these men did not set themselves up against the apostle’s teaching, but they misunderstood what that teaching actually was. For example, there are instances where St. Paul himself applies the term *resurrection* to the spiritual life, and these passages were taken up by these Corinthians as if they referred to the *only* Resurrection. In the 11th verse, therefore, he tells them, “Whether it were I or they” — *i. e.*, the other Apostles — “so we preached, and so ye believed;” and then he tells them that the Christian doctrine was not merely that there should be an Immortality, but rather *this*, that there should be a resurrection; not that there should be a mere formless existence, but that there should be an existence in a Form. And he tells them further, that the resurrection was not merely a resurrection, but *the* resurrection; *the* historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ being the substantial pledge of *our* immortality and *our* resurrection. By all his earnestness in saying this, the Apostle Paul testifies to the immense value and importance of historical Christianity.

Now, brethren, let us understand this matter. There are two forms in which it is conceivable that Christianity may exist; the one is essential Christianity, the other historical Christianity. By the first we mean the essentials of the Christian doctrine. If we may suppose, for the sake of argument, that without the aid of Christ, without the intervention of His mediatorial intercession, a man could arrive at all the chief Christian doctrines; for instance, that God is the Father of all the human race, and not of a mere section of it; that all men are His children; that it is a Divine

Spirit which is the source of all goodness in man; that the righteousness acceptable in His sight is not ceremonial but moral goodness; that the only *principle* which reconciles the soul to God, making it at one with God, is self-sacrifice—he would have arrived at the essence of Christianity. And this is not a mere supposition, a simple hypothesis; for history tells us that before the Redeemer's advent there were a few who, by the aid of the Spirit of God, had reached to a knowledge which is marvellous and astonishing to us. And indeed the ancient fathers loved to teach of such men, that they, even although heathen, by the Eternal Word within them, had been led to the reception of those truths which Christ came to teach: so that as amongst the Gentiles, "they, without the law, did by nature the things contained in the law," so likewise those men, without the *knowledge* of the actual historical Jesus Christ, had gained the knowledge of truths which came from His Spirit.

By historical Christianity, however, we mean not those truths abstractedly, but considered as actually existing in the life of Jesus Christ; not merely the truth that God is our Father, but the belief that though "no man hath seen God at any time," yet "the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him;" not merely the truth of the sonship of our humanity, but that there is One above all others who, in the highest and truest sense, is the only-begotten Son of God; not merely that goodness and spiritual excellence is the righteousness which is acceptable in God's sight, but that these are not mere dreams and aspirations of our humanity, that they are actual realities, and have truly existed here below in the life of One—"the man Christ Jesus:" not merely the abstract *law* of self-sacrifice, but the *real* Self-sacrifice—the one atoning Sacrifice which has redeemed the whole world. Now to this historical Christianity the apostle bears the strongest testimony when he comes to these facts, that Jesus Christ had been seen by Cephas and the other Apostles, and by the five hundred brethren, and by himself.

Brethren, let us understand this fully. The principle we lay down is this: Reverence for persons precedes the belief in truths. We will grant that there have been a few remarkable exceptions in the human race, who, by God's Spirit within them, have reached truth without knowing Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but this is not the rule. One in ten thousand may have so attained it, but for the remaining nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine the rule is rather that it is not by our desires or aspirations, or

our intellect, that we reach the truth, but it is believing first in persons who have held the truth. And so those truths which you hold deepest you have gained, not by the illumination of your own intellect, but you have reached them first by trusting in some great or good *one*, and then, through him, by obtaining credible evidence of those truths.

Take, for instance, the doctrine of the Resurrection; sometimes it appears distinct and credible, at others it appears almost incredible. And if we look into ourselves we shall find that the times when it seemed almost incredible were those in which we began to despair of human nature—when some great crime or meanness had taken place which made us almost disgusted with our humanity, and set us wondering *why* such things should be permitted to live hereafter. And the moments when we believed most strongly and mightily in our resurrection and immortality were the moments when we felt assured that human perfectibility was no dream, since we saw the evidence of a goodness most like God's, which could not be limited by death. Carry on this principle, and then you have the very spirit of historical Christianity. For, brethren, we do not believe that there shall be a Life to come, merely because there is something within us which craves for it, but because we have believed in the life, and death, and resurrection of the Man of Nazareth; because that glorious Life has kindled our lives, and because humanity through Him has become a noble thing; and all the littleness which we meet with in ourselves and in our fellow-men is but as nothing when balanced against that great, that perfect Humanity. Hence it is that the language often used in our own day about an absolute Christianity, separate from the personality of Jesus Christ, is, after all, but a dream. Our Christianity is not merely the abstract truths which Christ taught, but Christ Himself, who lived, and died, and rose again for us, our Redeemer and our God.

II. We pass on now to consider the second line of argument, one of a totally different description, by which the apostle substantiated the truth of the life to come, and of a resurrection in form. The argument is well known among logicians by the name of the *reductio ad absurdum*, when a man can show, not so much that his own opinions are true, as that all others which contradict them are false, and end in a monstrous absurdity. This is precisely the line taken by the Apostle Paul from the 13th to the 20th verse. And the first absurdity to which he drives the opponents of the doctrine of the Resurrection is this: "If there be no resurrec-

tion of the dead, then is Christ not risen." Now let us endeavor to understand the absurdity implied here. You will observe the apostle waives at once all those arguments which might arise out of the eternal nature of Jesus Christ, and contemplates Him for a moment simply as a mortal man; and he says it is an absurdity to believe that *that* man perished. Here, when on this earth, the Son of Man grounded His pretensions on this, that He should rise again from the dead. If, then, He did rise from the dead, His testimony was true; if He did not, He was an impostor. On this point He joined issue both with the Pharisees and the Sadducees while he was yet in the world. The Sadducees denied the possibility of *a* resurrection; the Pharisees denied the possibility of *His* resurrection; and the high-priest laid a seal on His grave, that His disciples might not hold out to the world that He *had* risen from the dead.

1. Now, if Christ be not risen, argued the apostle, you are driven to this monstrous supposition that the Pharisees and Sadducees were right, and that the Son of Man was wrong; you are driven to this, that a pure and just and holy life is not a whit more certain of attaining to God's truth than a false, and selfish, and hypocritical one. Nay more; you are driven to this, that when the Son of Man hung upon the cross, and there came over His mind one moment of agonizing doubt, followed by a bright moment of joyful and confiding trust—you are driven to the supposition that the doubt was right and that the trust was wrong—that when He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," God's reply to that prayer was "Annihilation!"—that He who had made His life one perpetual act of consecration to His Father's service, received for His reward the same fate as attended the blaspheming malefactor. Brethren, there may be some who can entertain such belief, but the credulity which receives the most monstrous superstition is infinitely less than theirs. The mind which can on such a supposition disbelieve the Resurrection, is such a marvellous mixture of credulity and incredulity as must be almost unparalleled in the history of the human species.

2. Once more: the apostle drives his opponents to this absurdity: If there be no resurrection of the dead, the Christian faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Now what he here implies is, that the Christian faith, in such a case, must have failed in redeeming man from sin. For he assumes that, except in the belief of the Resurrection, the quitting of sin, and the rising in mastery over



the flesh and its desires, is utterly impossible to man. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," is an inevitable conclusion. And you are driven also to this conclusion—that, just as all other religions have failed in redeeming man from sin, the Christian religion has also failed. It has become the fashion in these days to hold that, just in proportion as a belief in the Resurrection enters into our motives for right-doing, that right-doing loses its value; and in a very remarkable but very sophistical work, published not many months ago, it is argued that he alone can be enabled to do any really good spiritual work who disbelieves in a life hereafter, and, for this reason, that he alone does good for its own sake, and not from the hope of reward. It is not for a future life that such an one works, but for posterity: he loves the men around him, knowing all the while that he himself must perish.

Brethren, let us examine the depths of this sophistry. In the first place, you will observe that, in removing the hope of the life to come, you have taken away all value from the *present* life—all that makes life worth possessing or mankind worth living for. Why should we live and labor for such a posterity, for beings scarcely higher than the "half-reasoning elephant?" And thus, in endeavoring to give worth to human goodness, you have taken away the dignity and value of human existence. Besides, you will observe the sophistry of the argument in this respect, that to do right Christianly is not doing so for the sake of *happiness* in the world to come, but for *life*. This it is which is the deep, irrepressible craving of the human soul. "It is more life and fuller that we want." So that the apostle forces us to the conclusion, that if there be no resurrection from the dead, there is nothing whatever that can save man from sin; and the Gospel, sanctioned as it is by the Cross of Christ itself, turns out to be one fatal, tremendous, awful failure.

3. Again: another absurdity arises from this supposition, that the Apostles would be found false witnesses. "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." There is something very touching, Christian brethren, in the manner in which the apostle writes this monstrous supposition. That *he* should be a false witness!—a thing to him incredible and monstrous. You will observe he does not leave room one moment for supposing the possibility of a mistake. There was no mistake. It was either true, or it was a falsehood. The resurrection of Christ was or was not a matter of fact; James, Cephas, the twelve, the five hundred, either had or

had not seen the Lord Jesus; Thomas either had, or had not, put his finger into the print of the nails; either the resurrection was a fact, or else it followed with the certainty of demonstration that the Apostles were intentional false witnesses before God.

There may be some, however, to whom this would not seem so monstrous a supposition as it did to the Apostle Paul. Well, let us examine it a little more closely. There is a certain instinct within us generally which enables us to detect when a man is speaking the truth. When you are listening to an advocate, you can generally tell whether he really believes what he says. You may generally see whether he is earnest merely to gain his cause, or because he believes that his client's cause is right. Truth, so to speak, has a certain *ring* by which it may be known. Now this chapter *rings* with truth: every word is, as it were, alive with it; and before you can believe that there is no resurrection of the dead, you must believe that this glorious chapter, with all its earnestness of argument, and all its richness of metaphor and force of illustration, was written by one who was speaking what was false, and who, moreover, *knew* at his heart that he was speaking what was false.

Another witness to this fact was the Apostle Peter. Brethren, there are two things which rarely go together, courage and falsehood; a brave man is almost always an honest man, and St. Peter was by nature a brave man. But let us qualify this assertion. There are circumstances in which a brave and honest man may be betrayed by the sudden force of temptation into a dereliction from the truth, and such a thing had occurred in the life of St. Peter. In the moment of Christ's apprehension he said that which was not true, and afterwards, as we should have expected from his character, "he went out and wept bitterly." Now it was after this bitter repentance, when his whole demeanor was changed, and his trembling hesitation had given way to certainty, that he went forth and stood, as upon a rock, before the kings and councils of the world, protesting that he *knew* that the Lord was risen. Brethren, there must be a cause given for this. Can we believe that the man who laid his hand on the sharp edge of the axe, or he who asked that he might be crucified with his head downward, as unworthy to die as his Redeemer died? can we believe that *he* went through all his life falsely—that his life was not only a falsehood, but a systematic and continued falsehood, kept up to the very last; and that the brave-hearted, true man, with his dying lips, gave utterance to a lie?

4. Once more: the opponents of this doctrine of the Resurrection are driven to the conclusion that those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. Brethren, let us examine *that* absurdity; and, in the first place, distinguish that monstrous supposition from one which somewhat resembles it. The apostle does not say that it is impossible that *man* should perish. It is a favorite argument with many to point to the lofty attainments and the irrepressible aspirations of the human soul as a proof of its immortality. I am free to confess that arguments such as these, founded upon the excellence of human nature, have no power with me. For human life, taken in itself and viewed in its common aspects, is a mean and paltry thing, and there are days and hours when it seems to us almost incredible that such things as we are should live again at all. There is nothing which makes annihilation impossible. God, in the superabundance of His power, creates *seeds* merely to cast them again into annihilation. We do not see why He can not create souls and cast them again into nothingness as easily as He does seeds. They have lived—they have had their twenty, or forty, or sixty years of existence—why should they ask for more?

This is not St. Paul's argument. He does not speak of the excellence of human nature: it is not from this that he draws his inference and proof of immortality. But it is from this, that if there be no resurrection of the dead, then they "who have fallen asleep in Christ" have perished: in other words, the best, the purest, the noblest of the human race have lived—only to die forever. For even our adversaries will grant us this, that since the days of Christ there have been exhibited to the world a purity, a self-sacrifice, a humility such as the world never saw before: earth in all its ages has nothing which can be compared with "the noble army of martyrs." Now you are called upon to believe that all these have perished everlastingly; that they served God, loved Him, did His will, and that He sent *them* down like the Son of God into annihilation! You are required to believe, moreover, that, as they attained to this goodness, purity, and excellence by believing what was false, namely, the Resurrection, so it is only by believing what is true that they could arrive at the opposite, that is, the selfish and base character. So that we are driven to this strange paradox—that by believing that which is false we become pure and noble, and by believing that which is true, we become base and selfish! Believe this, who can?

These are the difficulties of infidelity—we put them before

the infidel triumphantly. And if you are unable to believe his argument, if you can not come to his conclusion, then there remains the other and the plain conclusion of the apostle: "Now *is* Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

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## LECTURE XXIX.

1 CORINTHIANS xv. 13-20. *Easter Day, April 20, 1851.*

(MORNING SERMON.)

THE Church of Corinth exhibited in the time of the Apostle Paul the remarkable spectacle of a Christianity existing together with a disbelief in immortality. The history of the anomaly was this, that when Christianity first came into contact with the then-existing philosophy and religion of the world, it partly superseded them, and partly ingrafted itself upon them. The result of that ingraftation was, that the fruit which arose from the admixture savored partly of the new graft, and partly of the old stock. Among the philosophies of the world then existing there was an opinion which regarded all evil as belonging to the body, not that which the apostle speaks of as "the body of sin and death," but the real material body. It was held that the cause of sin in the world was the admixture of pure spirit with an inherently corrupt materialism. The result of this opinion was a twofold heresy, which branched into directions totally divergent. According to the first, men believing in the depravity of matter held that materialism was all evil, that the spirit was itself innocent, and that to the body alone was guilt to be referred. The result of this conception of Christianity was the belief that the spirit was permitted to act as it chose, for to the body was all the sin imputed. This was the origin of that Antinomianism which St. James so forcibly contradicts. The other heresy was in a totally different direction: men believing that the body was the cause of all evil, endeavored to crush and entirely subdue it; and this was the origin of that ascetic system against which St. Paul sets himself in so many of his Epistles.

These opinions then existing in the world, it was to be expected that when Christianity was preached to such men the expressions of Christianity should be misunderstood and misinterpreted. For every expression used by the Apostles had already been used by those philosophers; so that when

the Apostles spake of regeneration, "Yes," said these men, "this is the religion we want; we desire the regeneration of society." When they spake of the resurrection of Christ, and told men to rise above the lusts of the flesh, "Yes," they replied, "this is the resurrection we need—a spiritual, not a literal one: the resurrection is past already, the only grave from which we are to be delivered is the grave of sin." And when, again, the apostle told of the redemption of the body, "Yes," said they, "we will cleave to this, for it is the redemption of the *body* that we want." So that in the Church of Corinth, the Resurrection, plainly as it was preached by the Apostles, had become diluted into a question of the temporal regeneration of society.

Now what was remarkable in this form of infidelity was, that it was to some extent spiritual, sublime, and unselfish. Sublime, for it commanded to dispense with all enjoyments of the senses; spiritual and unselfish, because it demanded virtue quite separate from the hope of immortality. And what makes this interesting to us now is, that ours somewhat resembles that old infidelity; there are sounds however which, widely as they may differ from those Corinthian views in some respects, agree in this, that there is much in them spiritual and sublime. We are told that men die, and that an end then comes upon them; that the hope of immortality is merely a remnant of our selfishness, and that the only immortality for man is to enter by faith into the kingdom of goodness. Now the way in which the Apostle Paul met these views was with that line of argument which consists in demonstrating the impossibility of such a supposition, by deducing from it all the absurdities in which it clothes itself. For one moment he grants it: there is then no resurrection, no immortality! Let us therefore see the consequences: they are so awful and incredible, that no sane mind can possibly receive them. In other words, the apostle demonstrates that, great as may be the difficulty in believing in immortality, the difficulty in disbelieving it is tenfold greater.

We will then endeavor to-day to elaborate and draw out the four incredibilities of which the apostle speaks. The first absurdity of which he speaks, resulting from a denial of the resurrection of Jesus, is, "we are found false witnesses before God." *False* witnesses, not *mistaken* witnesses. He allows no loop-hole of escape: the Resurrection is a fact, or else a falsehood. And now consider the results of that supposition—Who are they that are the false witnesses of the Resurrection? Among them we find prominently two; with

these two the Book of the Acts of the Apostles is chiefly occupied. The first is St. Peter, the other St. Paul. St. Peter goes forth into the world strong in his conviction that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead; for in the early ages of Christianity the doctrine most preached was not the Cross, but the Resurrection. From a mistaken view of the writings of the Apostle Paul, as when he said, "I preach Christ crucified," it has been inferred that the chief doctrine of his life was the Crucifixion; but it was the crucified and *risen* Saviour that he preached, rather than the mere fact of the crucifixion. In the early ages it was almost unnecessary to speak of the Cross, for the crucifixion of the Redeemer was a thing not done in a corner: no one thought of denying *that*. But instead of this, the Apostles went forth, preaching that from which the world recoiled, that Christ had risen. If the Apostle Peter went forth to proclaim the Gospel to the Jews, even before the Sanhedrim and before all the people, this was his doctrine, "Jesus and the Resurrection." Thus taught the Apostle Peter. His character was well known to be this—brave, fearless, impetuous; exactly that character to which falsehood is impossible. The brave man never is habitually a liar: in moments of fearfulness, as when Peter denied his Lord, he may be untrue, but he will not be so who has courage in his soul.

Another remark respecting these men being false witnesses is, that St. Paul must have been a false declarer of the truth, and the incredibility of this we are content to rest on the single chapter now before us—namely, the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. In common life we judge of a witness by his look and actions; so let us judge this chapter. You will observe that it is not the eloquence of a hired writer, neither is it the eloquence of a priest, concealing and mystifying the doctrine: the denial of the Resurrection had kindled the earnest, glorious nature of the apostle into one burning, glowing fire: every word is full of life. We defy you to read the chapter and believe that Paul was doubtful of the truths he there asserted. This is one of the impossibilities: if there be no resurrection of the dead, then these two glorious Apostles were false witnesses!

The second incredible thing is this: If there be no resurrection, Christ is not risen. Remark the severe, rigorous logic of St. Paul: he refuses to place the human race in one category and Jesus Christ in another. If Jesus rose, then the human race shall also rise; but if there be no resurrection for man, then the apostle, holding to his logic, says Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is not risen.

Now let us endeavor to understand the results of this conclusion, and what was its bearing. Last Friday we tried to meditate on that death which all men, with varied meanings in their expressions, have agreed to call divine. We endeavored to meditate on the darkness of that human soul struggling in weakness and perplexity with the mystery of death. We tried to think on that love mightier than death, which even in the hour of insult could calmly excuse the circumstances of that insult and forgive it. We tried to think of that sentence as the sentence of God, which promised forgiveness and a place in Paradise to the dying penitent. We meditated on that infinite tenderness of human affection which in the dying hour provided for a mother a son, and for a friend a brother; seeming to assure us that these domestic affections shall last beyond the grave. We tried to think, too, of His trust in commending His soul into His Father's hands. And, lastly, we considered that marvellous expression—in the original one single word—which declared that the duty and the life of Christ were only closed together. Now if there be no resurrection of the dead, then that life was cast aside by God as worthless. It was, and is not; and that pardon which He besought, and which seemed so worthy of God to grant, was not ratified above; and that earthly darkness was but the prelude to that eternal night into which the soul of the Redeemer was entering. That sublime trust was not accepted by the Father, but sternly and cruelly rejected; Judas forsook Him; and God, like Judas, forsook Him too! The Pharisees conquered, and God stood by and ratified their triumph! And then the disbeliever in immortality asks us to believe in, to trust, and to love that God who treated Jesus so. This is the impossibility, the incredibility, founded on the moral character of God, which we are compelled to receive if we deny the Resurrection.

The third absurdity is, that the Christian faith is then unable to free from sin. The ground upon which the apostle stood was this, that no faith can save from sin without the belief in immortality. We are then driven to this conclusion, that since every other faith has failed hitherto, the Christian faith has failed also, since the immortality it professes is vain. Now one objection by which this argument has been met is this: "That goodness," say the objectors, "which rests only on the belief of immortality, is but a form of selfishness, after all." And I do believe that there are men who reject the doctrine of the Resurrection chiefly on this ground, because they think that only by denying it can they deliver man from selfishness.

And because this view is plausible, and because it contains in it some germ of truth, let us look at it for a moment. If a man does good for the sake of reward, or if he avoids evil on account of the punishment due to it, so far his goodness is but a form of selfishness; and observe that the introduction of the element of eternity does not alter the *quality* of it. But when we come to look at the effect produced upon us in liberating us from sin by the belief in immortality, we shall see that it is not the thought of reward that enters into that conception; when you have got to the lowest depth of your heart, you will find that it is not the mere desire of happiness, but a craving as natural to us as the desire for food—the craving for nobler, higher life. To be with God, to see God and to understand Him—this is meant by the desire of everlasting life. This is the language of Christianity: “Ye are the children of light.” Ye are stated in the Bible in words, and symbolically in baptism, to be the children of God; ye are the heirs of immortality: do not live as if ye were only the heirs of time. Narrow this conception, limit that infinite existence to seventy years, and all is inevitably contracted, every hope stunted, high aims become simply impossible.

And now, my Christian brethren, we ask what is the single motive that can be brought forward to liberate a man from selfishness when you have taken away this belief in immortality? Will you tell him to live for posterity? what is posterity to him? or for the human race in ages hereafter? But what is the human race to him, especially when its eternity is taken from it, and you have declared it to be only mortal? The sentence of the apostle is plain: “Your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.” Infidelity must be selfish: if to-morrow we die, then to-day let us eat and drink; it is but a matter of taste how we live. If man is to die the death of the swine, why may he not live the life of the swine? If there be no immortality, why am I to be the declarer and defender of injured rights? Why am I not to execute vengeance, knowing that if it be not executed now, it never can be? Tell us why, when every passion is craving for gratification, a man is to deny himself their satisfaction, if he is no exalted thing, no heir of immortality, but only a mere sensitive worm, endowed with the questionable good of a consciousness of his own misery? These are the questions which infidelity has to answer.

The last incredibility from which the apostle argues is that, if there be no resurrection, then they that have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. When the apostle speaks of those



fallen asleep in Christ, he does not necessarily mean only those who have borne the Christian name, but those who have lived with the mind of Christ and died with His Spirit; those who in the elder dispensation only dimly desiered the coming of that purer day, scarcely knowing what it was, who still in that faith lived the high and noble life of the ancient Jew; also those, neither Jew nor Christian, who lived in heathen days, but were yet not disobedient to the Eternal Voice speaking in their hearts, and who by means of that lived above their generations, penetrating into the invisible, and so became heirs of the righteousness which is by faith—all those, therefore, have perished! Now see what these skeptics require us to believe: that all those who have shed a sunshine upon earth, and whose affections were so pure and good that they seemed to tell you of an eternity, perished utterly, as the selfish and impure! You are required to believe that those who died in the field of battle, bravely giving up their lives for others, died even as the false and the coward dies. You are required to believe that, when there arose a great cry at midnight, and the wreck went down, they who passed out of the world with the oath of blasphemy, or the shriek of despair, shared the same fate with those who calmly resigned their departing spirits into their Father's hand, with nothing but an awful silence to greet them, like that which greeted the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel! You are required to believe that the pure and wise of this world have all been wrong, and the selfish and sensual all right. If from this you shrink as from a thing derogatory to God, then there remains but that conclusion to which St. Paul conducts us: "Now is Christ risen from the dead." The spiritual resurrection is but the mere foretaste and pledge of the literal. Let us, brethren, seek to rise with Christ above this world and our own selves, for every act tells on that eternity, every thought and every word reap an everlasting harvest.

"Therefore," says the apostle, in the conclusion of this chapter, "be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

## LECTURE XXX.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 21-34. June 6, 1852.

IN following the train of argument contained in this chapter, it must be clearly kept in remembrance that the error combated by St. Paul was not the denial of immortality, but the denial of a resurrection. The ultra-spiritualizers in Corinth did not say, "Man perishes forever in the grave," but, "The form in which the spirit lived shall never be restored. From the moment death touches earthly life, Man becomes forever a bodiless spirit." No doubt in this chapter there are passages in which the apostle speaks of immortality, but they are only incidental to the general argument—as, for example, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The chief thing, therefore, to lay stress on is, that in the early Church there was not so much a denial of an immortality as of a resurrection.

In the earlier part of this chapter St. Paul proved the Resurrection by the fact of the resurrection of Christ, which he treats neither as a doctrine, nor a hope, nor an aspiration of the soul, but as an historical reality which, duly recorded and witnessed, took place actually and visibly upon this earth. Eye-witnesses tell us, said the apostle, that on numerous occasions openly, and after death, they saw, felt, heard, and talked with Christ. On that fact Christianity rests; and if there is any thing in the universe that can be substantiated, it is that fact. With this he triumphantly concludes that *reductio ad absurdum* which is contained in verses 13-20: "Now *is* Christ risen from the dead."

To-day we consider—

- I. The results of Christ's resurrection to us.
- II. Corroborative proofs.

I. The first result is thus expressed: "He is become the first-fruits of them that sleep." The expression is Jewish; and to discover what it implies we must remember the ancient custom. The first-fruits of the harvest were dedicated to God, whereby He put in His claim for the whole, just as shutting up a road once a year puts in a claim of proprietorship to the right of way forever. It was thus St. Paul un-

derstood the ceremony: "For if the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy." Thus when the apostle says that "Christ is the first-fruits of them that slept," he implies that part of the harvest has been claimed for God, and therefore that the rest is His too. The resurrection of Christ is a pledge of the resurrection of all who share in His humanity.

Now two questions arise on this: 1. Why does this result take place? 2. When will it take place?

1. The ground on which it rests: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (ver. 22). Two doctrines are given to us in this text—original sin and original righteousness; the doctrine of the natural corruption and fault of our nature, and the doctrine of the Divine life which belongs to our higher nature.

And first: "In Adam all die."

Do not understand this as if the apostle merely said, "If you sin as Adam sinned, you will die as Adam died." This were mere Pelagianism, and is expressly condemned in the article of our Church on Original Sin. According to the Scriptures, we inherit the first man's nature, and that nature has in it the mortal, not the immortal. And yet there are in all of us two natures, that of the animal and that of the Spirit—an Adam and a Christ.

Let us see what St. Paul meant by being "in Adam." He explains himself: "The first man was of the earth, earthy;" and again, "The first man Adam was made a living soul." But here we must recollect that the term "a living soul" means a mere natural man. The soul, as used by St. Paul, is distinguished from the body and the spirit, as that part of our complex humanity which embraces all our natural powers. "A living soul" is, then, the term used by the apostle to express the natural man endowed with intellectual powers, with passions, and with those appetites which belong to us in common with the animals. In this our immortality does not reside; and it is from fixing our attention on the decay of these that doubt of our immortality begins. It is a dismal and appalling thing to witness the slow failure of living powers: as life goes on, to watch the eye losing its lustre, and the cheek its roundness; to see the limbs it was once such a pure delight to gaze on, becoming feeble and worn; to perceive the memory wander, and the features no longer bright with the light of expression; to mark the mind relax its grasp; and to ask the dreary question—Are these things immortal? You can not but disbelieve, if you rest your hope of immortality on their endurance. When you have identified these things with *the man*, no wonder if a

cold and faithless feeling steals over the heart—no wonder if the gloomy thought be yours, The end is coming, the long night on which no dawn shall ever break!

Now the simple reply to all this is, that the extinction of these powers is no proof against immortality, because they are not the seat of the immortal. They belong to the animal—to the organs of our intercourse with the visible world. And though it may be proved that that eye shall never open again, those limbs never again thrill with life, yet such proof does not touch the truth that the man—the spirit—shall live for evermore. Therefore, it is not in what we inherit from Adam the man, but in what we hold from Christ the Spirit, that our immortality resides.

Nay more: it is in the order of God's providence that the growth of the Christ within us shall be in exact proportion to the decay of the Adam. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." And this evidence of our immortality, blessed be God! is perpetually and not uncommonly before us. It is no strange or unknown thing to see the spirit ripening in exact proportion to the decay of the body. Many a sufferer in protracted illness feels each day more deeply the powers of the world to come. Many an aged one there is who loses, one by one, all his physical powers, and yet the spiritual in him is mightiest at the last. Who can read that ancient legend of the Apostle John carried into the Christian Church, able only to articulate, "Little children, love one another," without feeling that age and death touch not the Immortal Love?

2. The next question which we proposed was, When will this result take place? This is answered by St. Paul in the twenty-third and the following verses: "Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming; then cometh the end."

Confessedly this is a mysterious passage; nevertheless, let us see how much is clear. First, that the resurrection can not be till the kingdom is complete. Paul does not say that the consciousness of the departed shall not begin till then, but that *the resurrection*—that finished condition when humanity shall be fulfilled—is not to commence till the second coming of Christ.

Secondly, that certain hindrances at present prevent the perfect operation of God in our souls. Evil in a thousand forms surrounds us. We are the victims of physical and moral evil, and till this is put down forever the completeness of the individual can not be; for we are bound up with the universe. Talk of the perfect happiness of any unit man

while the race still mourns ! Why, the evils of the race fall on him every day. Talk of the perfect bliss of any spirit while the spiritual kingdom is incomplete ! No, the golden close is yet to come, and the blessing of the individual parts can only be with the blessing of the whole. And so the apostle speaks of the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together until now, "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Thirdly, that the mediatorial kingdom of Christ shall be superseded by an immediate one ; therefore the present form in which God has revealed Himself is only temporary. When the object of the present kingdom of Christ has been attained in the conquest of evil, there will be no longer need of a mediator. Then God will be known immediately. We shall know Him, when the mediatorial has merged in the immaterial, in a way more high, more intimate, more sublime than even through Christ. Then, when the last hindrance, the last enemy is removed, which prevents the entire entrance of God into the soul, we shall see Him face to face, know Him even as we are known, awake up satisfied in His likeness, and be transformed into pure recipients of the Divine glory. That will be the Resurrection.

## II. Corroborative proofs.

These are two in number, and both are *argumenta ad hominem*. They are not proofs valid to all men, but cogent only to Christians, as these Corinthians were. They assume Christian grounds which would be admitted by all who believed in Christ. They only go to prove, not that a resurrection must be, but that it is the doctrine of Christianity, although a party in the Corinthian Church denied it.

The first of these proofs is given in the twenty-ninth verse. It is well known that it is a disputed passage ; and after many years' study of it I am compelled to come to this conclusion, that no interpretation that has been offered is entirely free from objection. All that I can do is to put before you the chief interpretations. By some it is supposed to refer to vicarious baptism, a custom which certainly prevailed in later ages of the Church, when a living Christian was baptized in the place of a catechumen who had died before this sacrament could be administered. According to this idea, the Christian work was not so much to convert the living as to baptize for the dead. There is an immense improbability that Paul could have sustained a superstition so abject, even by an alusion. He could not have even spoken of it without anger. It is more probable that the custom arose from an erroneous

interpretation of this passage. There is another opinion worth mentioning, namely, that the passage is an elliptical one. When baptized, Christians made a profession of a belief in a resurrection, and St. Paul asks them here, "What, then, was the meaning of their profession? Why were they baptized into the faith of a resurrection, if there were none?"

We may learn from this the value of baptism to the Church. Another such instance occurs in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans: the heresy of Antinomianism had crept in: "Let us sin," said some, "that grace may abound." In refutation of this, St. Paul appeals to baptism. Here he refutes a heresy concerning the resurrection by another appeal to baptism. Some will say, "If baptism be but a form or an instrument, having not in itself any mysterious power, of what purpose is baptism?" Brethren, I reply, of much, every way; and if it were only for this, it would be much, that so long as it remains in the Christian Church, there is still left a ground of appeal against heresy.

The second argument is in the thirtieth verse: "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" If the future life were no Christian doctrine, then the whole apostolic life—nay, the whole Christian life, were a monstrous and senseless folly. For St. Paul's life was one great living death: he was ever on the brink of martyrdom. Figuratively, speaking popularly, "after the manner of men," he had fought as with wild beasts at Ephesus. Grant an immortality, and all this has a meaning; deny it, and it was in him a gratuitous folly. A life of martyrdom proves, at all events, that men are in earnest, though they may not be true. The value of such a testimony to immortality must be further proved by considering whether the grounds were such that men could judge of them unmistakably. St. Paul devotes the beginning of this chapter to the proof of the reality of the fact. Afterwards, by a *reductio ad absurdum*, he argues that if Christ be not risen, the whole question of right and wrong is decided in favor of wrong. St. Paul does not say, "We are mistaken," but he says, "We are found liars."

Now in what does the absurdity of this consist? The Apostles must have been either good or bad men. If good, that they should have told this lie is incredible, for Christianity is to make men not false, but better, more holy, more humble, and more pure. If bad men, why did they sacrifice themselves for the cause of goodness? In suffering and in death, they witnessed to the truth which they taught; and it is a moral monstrosity that good men should die for what they believed to be a lie. It is a gross absurdity that men

should bear indignity, woe, and pain, if they did not believe that there would be an eternal life for which all this was a preparation.

For if souls be immortal, then Christianity has been an inestimable blessing: spirits have begun a sanctification here which will progress forever; but if souls be not immortal, then it is quite a question whether Christianity has blessed the world or not. We personally may think it has, but if we reject the immortality of man, there is much to be said on the other side. A recent writer has argued very plausibly that Christianity has done nothing. And if immortality be untrue, then we may almost agree with him when we remember the persecutions, the prison and the torture-chamber, the religious wars and tyrannies which have been inflicted and carried on in the name of Christ; when we remember that even in this nineteenth century cannibalism and the torture of prisoners are still prevailing. Again, are we quite sure that Christian America, with her slavery, is a great advance on pagan Rome? or Christian England either, with her religious hatreds and her religious pride? If the Kingdom of God comes only with observation, I am not certain that we can show cause why that life of sublime devotion of St. Paul's was not a noble existence wasted.

And again, if the soul be not immortal, Christian life, not merely apostolic devotedness, is "a grand impertinence." "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," was the motto and epitaph of Sardanapalus; and if this life be *all*, we defy you to disprove the wisdom of such reasoning. How many of the myriads of the human race would do right for the *sake* of right, if they were only to live fifty years, and then die for evermore? Go to the sensualist, and tell him that a noble life is better than a base one, even for that time, and he will answer: "I like pleasure better than virtue: you can do as you please; for me, I will wisely enjoy my time. It is merely a matter of taste. By taking away my hope of a resurrection, you have dwarfed good and evil, and shortened their consequences. If I am only to live sixty or seventy years, there is no eternal right or wrong. By destroying the thought of immortality, I have lost the sense of the infinitude of evil, and the eternal nature of good."

Besides, with our hopes of immortality gone, the value of humanity ceases, and people become not worth living for. We have not got a motive strong enough to keep us from sin. Christianity is to redeem from evil: it loses its power, if the idea of immortal life be taken away. Go, then, to the sensualist, and tell him that, though the theory of a life to

come be a dream, yet that here the pleasure of doing right is a sublimer existence than that of self-indulgence. He will answer you, "Yes, but my appetites are strong, and it will cost me much to master them. The struggle will be with pain; and at last only a few years will be left. The victory is uncertain, and the present enjoyment is sure; and there is the banquet of life before me, and the wine sparkling in the cup, and passion rising in its might; why should I refrain?"

Do you think you can arrest that with some fine sentiment about nobler and baser being? Why, you have made him out base already. He dies, you tell him, like a dog; why should he live like an angel? You have the angelic tendency, and prefer the higher life. Well, live according to your nature; but *he* has the baser craving, and prefers the brute life. Why should he not live it? Ye who deny the resurrection to immortality, answer me that!

No, my brethren; the instincts of the animal will be more than a match for all the transcendental reasonings of the philosopher. If there be in us only that which is born of the flesh, only the mortal Adam, and not the immortal Christ, if to-morrow we die, then the conclusion can not be put aside—"Let us eat and drink, for the present is our all."

## LECTURE XXXI.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35-45. June 13, 1852.

WE have already divided this chapter into three sections. In the first and second sections we spoke of the proofs of the Resurrection; and these we found to be twofold—the *reductio ad absurdum*, which demonstrated it by showing the monstrous admissions a denier of the Resurrection was compelled to make; and the historical fact of Christ's resurrection.

In the third we arrived at the truth that His resurrection involved in it ours, and we replied to the questions why and when. We asked, Why does it imply our resurrection? and the answer given was, that in us there exists a twofold nature—the animal or Adamic, containing in it no germ of immortality; and the Divine or Christlike, the spirit which we receive from the Eternal Word, and by right of which we are heirs of the immortal life. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." We asked, When shall this resurrection finally take place? and the reply given was,



Not till the period which is called the Second Advent. St. Paul, leaving the question of Immortality untouched, pronounces that resurrection can not be till the end of all things. For all is moving on to a mighty consummation, and the blessing of an individual part can only be with the blessing of the whole.

To-day we shall be engaged on the fourth section—the credibility of a resurrection. St. Paul, in this portion of the chapter, replies to the question of possibility, “How are the dead raised?” And this he answers by arguments from analogy. As the seed dies before it can be quickened, as there is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon, as the imperfect precedes the perfect, as our natural life is earlier than our spiritual—so is the resurrection of the dead.

First, then, as to the nature of the argument from analogy. Analogy is probability from a parallel case. We assume that the same law which operates in the one case will operate in another, if there be a resemblance between the relations of the two things compared. Thus, when in reply to the disciples, who did not comprehend the necessity of His death, Christ said, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,” He was reasoning from analogy. For as in nature life comes through death, so also is it in the world of spirit. The law of sacrifice, which accounts for the one fact, will also explain the other. Thus, when St. Paul shows that the life of the seed is continued after apparent death in a higher form, and argues that in like manner the human spirit may be reunited to form, he reasons from analogy. He assumes that there is a probability of the same law operating in one case as operated in the other.

But we must remember how far this argument is valid, and what is its legitimate force. It does not amount to proof; it only shows that the thing in question is credible. It does not demonstrate that a resurrection *must* be; it only shows that it *may* be. For it does not follow that because the law of sacrifice is found in the harvest, therefore it shall be found in the redemption of the world, and that Christ's death must redeem; but it does follow that this doctrine of Atonement is not incredible, for it is found to be in harmony with the analogies of nature. The conceivableness of the Atonement follows from the analogies drawn from nature's laws working in the wheat; but the *proof* of the Atonement is the word of Christ himself.

It does not follow that, because after death the life in a corn of wheat appears again, therefore the life in the human

soul will be continued ; but it does follow that the resurrection is quite intelligible and conceivable, and the objector who says it is impossible is silenced.

Now it is in this way that St. Paul concludes his masterly argument. He proves the resurrection from the historical fact, and by the absurdity which follows from denial of it ; and then he shows that so proved it is only parallel to a thousand daily facts, by the analogies which he draws from the dying and upspringing corn, and from the diverse glories of the sun, and moon, and stars. Let us distinguish, therefore, between the relative value of these arguments. We live, it is true, in a world filled with wondrous transformations, which suggest to us the likelihood of our immortality. The caterpillar passes into the butterfly, the snow-drop dies to rise again, spring leaps to life from the arms of winter, and the world rejoices in its resurrection. God gives us all this merciful assistance to our faith. But it is not on these grounds that our belief rests. These are not our proofs : they are only corroborations and illustrations ; for it does not follow with certainty that the body of man shall be restored, because the chrysalis, an apparent corpse, still lives. No ; we fetch our proofs from the Word of God and the nature of the human soul ; and we fetch our probabilities and illustrations from the suggestive world of types which lies all around us.

We pass on now, in the second place, to consider the credibility of the Resurrection ; that is, how, according to right reason, we can believe it possible, and that it is not irrational to believe it. Now there are two difficulties advanced : Firstly, in the question, "How are the dead raised ?" and in that which is a mere sneer, "With what body do they come ?"

The question, How are the dead raised ? may be a philosophical one. Let us understand it plainly. We are told that the entire human body undergoes a process of change every certain number of years, so that at the end of that time there is not a single particle which is the same as at first ; and then there comes this question, How shall the dead be raised ? with which of these bodies do they come ? And again, we know that the human body is dissolved in various ways—sometimes in fire ; and then comes the question, How are all these scattered portions to reunite ? do we really mean that the sound of the Archangel's trumpet shall bring them all together again ? And then those who are wise in such matters tell us, that there is not a single portion of the globe which has not, some time or other, been or-

ganic form. The other question is not a philosophical one, but merely a sneer, With what body do they come? It is as if the objector had said, "Let there be nothing vague: tell us all about it, you who assert you are inspired."

Now to these objections the Apostle Paul replies by analogy, and so far shows the credibility of the Resurrection. He discerns in this world three principles: First, that life, even in its lowest form, has the power of assimilating to itself atoms; he takes the corn of wheat, which, after being apparently destroyed, rises again, appropriating, as it grows, all that has affinity with itself, such as air and moisture: that body with which it is raised may be called its own body, and yet it is a new body. It is raised anew, with stem, and leaves, and fruit, and yet all the while we know that it is no new corn: it is the old life in the seed reappearing, developed in a higher form. It is a marvellous thing to see the power whereby that which we call the germ grows; how nothing can withstand it; how it creeps, climbs, and pierces even through walls, making for itself a way everywhere. Observe the force of the argument that arises from this fact—the argument of analogy. It does not *prove* the Resurrection, but it shows its *probability*.

The second analogy that St. Paul sees in nature is the marvellous superabundance of the creative power of God. God has planted illimited and unnumbered things. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars," and yet there is a difference between them—"one star differeth from another star in glory." There are gradations in all these forms—bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial—"but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." Here is an answer to all objections—"With what body do they come?" Are we to believe that God has exhausted His creative power, that He has done all He could have done, and that He could make no new form? Are we to believe that the wisdom and the knowledge, which have never been fathomed by the wisest, are expended, and that the power of God should be insufficient to find for the glorified spirit a form fit for it? We simply reply to the objection, "With what body do they come?"—"Look at the creative power of God!"

The third principle which St. Paul refers to is the principle of progress. The law of the universe is not Pharisaism—the law of custom stereotyped, and never to be changed. The law of God's universe is progress; and just as it was in creation—first the lower, and then the higher—so it is

throughout, progressive happiness, progressive knowledge, progressive virtue. St. Paul takes one instance: "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural." At first we lead a mere animal life—the life of instinct; then, as we grow older, passion succeeds; and after the era of passion our spirituality comes, if it comes at all—*after*, and not *before*. St. Paul draws a probability from this, that what our childhood was to our manhood—something imperfect followed by that which is more perfect—so will it be hereafter: our present humanity, with all its majesty, is nothing more than human infancy.

Lastly, St. Paul finds that all this coincides with the yearnings of the human heart. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." This is the substance of two prophecies, one in Isaiah, the other in Hosea, and expresses the yearnings of the heart for immortality. And we may observe that these yearnings are in accordance with our own. No man, in a high mood, ever felt that this life was really all. No man, then, ever looked on life and was satisfied. No man ever looked at the world without hoping that a time is coming when that creation which is now groaning and travailing in bondage shall be brought into the glorious liberty of the Son of God. No man ever looked upon our life and felt that it was to remain always what it now is: he could not, and would not believe that we are left here till our mortality predominates, and then that the grave is all. And this feeling, felt in a much greater and higher degree, becomes prophecy.

Isaiah says, "Death shall be swallowed up in victory." We find a yearning in our own hearts after immortality, and that not in our lowest, but in our highest moods; and when we look around, instead of finding something which damps our aspirations, we find the external world corroborating them. Then how shall we account for this marvellous coincidence? Shall we believe that these two things point to nothing? Shall we believe and shall we say that God our Father has cheated us with a lie? Therefore St. Paul concludes his masterly and striking argument thus: "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Of course, if there be no immortality and no resurrection, it matters not whom you injure, nor what you do. If you

injure him who has trusted you, of what consequence is it? In a few years all will be past and over. And if there be no immortality and no resurrection, it matters not what you do to yourself, whether you injure your own soul or not. But if there be a life to come, then the evil deed you did is not ended by its commission, but it will still go on and on. The evil you have done to others will remain throughout eternity; the evil you have done to your own soul will spread; as when you throw a stone into a pond the circles go on widening and spreading, so will that sin spread and increase over the sea of eternity. If there be no resurrection, then there are deeds of sacrifice which it would be no use to do; but if there be an immortality and a resurrection, then whatever good you do shall never be left unrewarded: the act of purity, the act of self-denial, the act of sacrifice, will ennoble you, making you holier and better. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" or, as at the conclusion of this chapter: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord!"

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## LECTURE XXXII.

1 CORINTHIANS xv. 46-58. *January 18, 1852.*

THE fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which has so often fallen on our ears like music in the night amidst funereal blackness, is filled with arguments, presumptive and direct, which tend to make Immortality credible; and, amongst others, St. Paul uses the analogy of the harvest, and argues from it the resurrection of the body: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

Now many an objector, on hearing this saying, might plausibly ask, Why this delay? why should not God create the perfect spiritual life at once? St. Paul anticipates this, and in answer applies a general law of the universe to the case before him. Such an immediate life of spiritual glory would be contrary to the Divine order in God's creation, for the law of that order is this: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."

Thus we have here a general principle adduced for a special purpose, which principle is yet not confined by St. Paul to this special case, but is felt by him to be one of universal

application. For it is the peculiarity of this philosophical apostle, that he connects Christianity with God's universe. In the Atonement, in the Resurrection, he sees no strange, isolated facts, but the truths which are found everywhere in various forms. And just as a naturalist would refer any particular species to some great type, so he finds at once the place for any Christian doctrine under some great and general law. This principle, that the natural precedes the spiritual, it will be our business to trace to-day.

We will consider, then, I. The universality of this law; and,

II. The spiritual instances given of it.

I. Its universality is disclosed in the order of creation. No ingenuity can reconcile the formal statements made by Moses respecting the creation with those made by modern science. The story of the Creation as told by Moses is one thing, as told by men of science it is another thing altogether. For the Bible is not a scientific work; it does not deal with hypotheses, nor with formal facts which are of time, and must necessarily vary, but it declares eternal *principles*. It is not a revelation of the truths of geology or astronomy, but it is a revelation of the character of God to us. And yet the spiritual principles declared by Moses are precisely those revealed by science. The first chapter of Genesis starts with the doctrine that the heavens and the earth, that light and darkness, were all created by one and the same God. Modern science day by day reveals more clearly the unity of design that pervades creation. Again, in Moses's account nothing is more remarkable than the principle of gradation on which he tells us the universe arose. And this is confirmed at every step by science. To this the accumulated strata bear their witness, to this the organic remains testify continually. Not that first which is highest, but that which is lowest: First, the formless earth, then the green herb growing on the sides of the upraised mountains, then the lowest forms of animal existence, then the highest types, then man, the last and noblest. And then, perhaps, an age to come, when all shall be swept away to make room for a higher and nobler race of beings. For "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural."

Again, the universality of this law is seen in the progress of the Jewish nation. We take it as an instance of this law among nations, because the Jews were confessedly the most spiritual of mankind. So vast is the interval between them and all others, that the collected works which, in speaking of

another people, would be called a national literature, are of them called an inspired Bible. The Scriptures stand separate from all other books, unapproachable in their spirituality. Marvellous, too, was the combination in them of the Asiatic veneration—of religious awe and contemplation—with the stern moral sense which belongs to the more northern nations. You will find among Hindoos a sense of the invisible as strong, and among the German family of nations an integrity as severe, but nowhere will you find the two so united as in the history of the chosen people.

And now, having considered what the Jews attained to, remember what they rose from—recollect their origin. They were a nation of slaves. Originally, too, of a stock more than commonly rude, hard, and rugged, they became in Egypt and in Palestine sensual, idolatrous, and money-loving. No history surpasses in horror the cruelty of the wars of Canaan. None tells such a tale of obstinacy, of gross indulgence, of minds apparently incapable of receiving spiritual principles. You are reminded of one of those trees whose exposed roots are seen gnarled and twisted, hard as iron, more like rock than wood, and yet whose foliage above is rich and noble: below extends the basis of the coarse and natural, above are manifested the beautiful and spiritual.

And this was not concealed from the Jews. Their prophets unvaryingly proclaimed the national character, and described them as the “most stiff-necked of people.” They were taught to say by one of their prophets: “A Syrian ready to perish was my father.” They were reminded, “Look to the rock from whence you were hewn, and the hole of the pit from whence you were digged.” For through many progressive stages was the great work of their elevation wrought; by slow gradations did this nation of slaves rise into a spiritual people. “That was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural.”

The universality of this law is shown again in the progress of the human race.

“The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a *quickeningspirit*.” “The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.” Nothing is more common than elaborate delineations of the perfect state of the first man. If we trust such descriptions, Eden was perfect heaven, and Adam was furnished with all knowledge intuitively, and adorned with every grace. But when we get away from poetry and picture-painting, we find that men have drawn largely from their imaginations without the warrant of one syllable of Scrip-

ture to corroborate the truth of the coloring. St. Paul says, Adam was "of the earth, earthy;" and again, he calls him "a living soul." Now recollect what soul (*ψυχή*) meant. The adjective corresponding to this substantive is used in 1 Cor. ii. 14, and is translated *natural*: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The natural man is, therefore, a man with a soul; the spiritual man is the man with a spirit. Adam was, therefore, "a living soul"—that is, a natural man—a man with intelligence, perception, and a moral sense, with power to form a society and to subdue Nature to himself. He was that, and that only.

The Fall, then, was only a necessary consequence of a state of mere nature. It was a step downward from innocence, but also it was a step onward—a giant step in human progress. It made goodness possible; for to know the evil, and to conquer it and choose the good, is far nobler than a state which only consists in our ignorance of both. Until the step of nature has been passed, the step of spirituality can not be made. "That was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural."

Thus did the race begin to share in the spiritual; and among many nations, and by means of many men, was the progress of mankind evolved; but their light was too scattered, and their isolated lives imparted little life. So the next stage in the progress of the race was the birth, and life, and death, and risen glory of Him who was made "a quickening Spirit." Then it was that in the fullness of time He was born who was the blossoming of our humanity—differing from the race that had gone before as the flower differs from the wood on which it grows: of the same nature and yet of another, more delicate and more ethereal. The natural man had passed, the spiritual Man was come. The spiritual Man, whose prerogative it was, not as the first Adam, to live in Eden for himself, but as the second Adam, to die on Calvary for others; not as the first Adam, to receive happiness; but as the second Adam, to confer life. It was no longer the natural man, but the quickening Spirit, that represented the race to God. The natural had risen into the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, earthy; the second man was the Lord from heaven.

## II. The spiritual instances of this law.

The law which is found to be true of nations and of the race is generally true of persons also; though in particulars its influence may be modified by individual peculiarities. Generally, then, this law is true of us as men.



And, first, our natural affections precede our spiritual.

There are two tables of commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and there are two orders in which they stand to each other. In the order of importance the love of God is first; in the order of time the love of man precedes; that is, we begin by loving man, we do not *begin* by loving God. Let us trace this principle farther. Love to man also begins lower down. We do not love our neighbors first; we do not all at once embrace the race in our affection; we ascend from a lower point. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—the table given on Sinai does not say *that*: it only specifies one kind of love—the love of children to parents. There are no rules given there of friendship, of patriotism, or of universal philanthropy; for in the Fifth Commandment they all lie as the future oak-tree lies in the acorn; the root of all the other developments of love is love and honor unto parents. That injunction laid the foundation deep and broad. For life depends greatly on the relations: "The child is father to the man." Rarely, when the mother has been all that woman should be, and the father has been true to the protecting and guiding the tender and strong instincts of his manhood, does the child turn out unnatural. But where there has been a want of these things, where any one part of the boy's nature has remained uncultivated, there the subsequent relationships will be ill sustained. For the friend, the husband, the citizen, are formed at the domestic hearth.

There is yet one step farther: out of human love grows love to God. A miserable and sad mistake is often made in opposition to this fact. There are men and women of cold and palsied affections who think of giving to God the love which has become cold to men. Settle it in your minds, God does not work so. It is quite true that Christianity makes the sublime demand on believers, "If a man hate father and mother, wife and children, his own life also, he can not be my disciple;" but before that was said it had demanded that we should "love our neighbor as ourselves," that we should "honor our father and mother." And, paradoxical as it may seem, you will never attain to that state of love to God which can sacrifice the dearest affections rather than do wrong, until you have cultivated them to the highest possible degree. For it is only by being true to all the lower forms of love, that we learn at last that fidelity to the highest love which can sacrifice them all rather than violate its sacredness.

Again, there is another mistake made by those who demand the love of God from a child. The time does come to every child, as it came to the childhood of Christ, when the love of the earthly parent is felt to be second to the love of the Heavenly Father; but *this is not the first*, "for that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural." It is true, there have been cases where children have given striking proof of love to God, but these, even to a proverb, die young, because they are precocious, unnatural, forced; and God never forces character.

For a time the father represents God, is in the place of God to the child. He is to train the affections which afterwards shall be given to God; and the brother those which shall expand hereafter for Christ. Like the trellis round which the tendrils clasp till they are fit to transplant, so are the powers of love within the child supported and strengthened as he leans upon his father, till they are mature enough to stand alone for God. And you can not reverse this without great peril to the child's spiritual nature. You can not *force* love to God. By no outrageous leaps, but by slow walking, is the spiritual love reached.

Lastly: the moral precedes the spiritual.

Let us remember once more the definition we have given of the word "soul"—the moral and intellectual qualities belonging to the man. And then let us take the apostle's own words: "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." And this is true of all; for the history of the Jewish race, of the human race, is repeated in the history of every individual. There is a time when the Adam is formed within us, when the Christ begins to be formed, when we feel within us the sense of "Christ in us, the hope of glory," when the "living soul," as ruler of the man, gives place to the "quickeningspirit." Ever it is true that the animal, the intellectual, and the moral precede the spiritual life.

But there are two stages through which we pass: through temptation and through sorrow.

1. It was through temptation that the first Adam fell from a state of nature. It was through temptation, too, that the second Adam redeemed humanity into a state of grace. To the first Adam this world was as a garden is to a child, in which he has nothing to do but to taste and enjoy. Duty came with its infinite demands: it came into collision with the finite appetites, and he fell. The first state is simply that of untempted innocence. In the temptation of the second Adam infinite duty consecrated certain principles of action

without reference to consequences: "Man shall not live by bread alone:" "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God:" "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." We passed into the spiritual state when we fell. It is not *better* to do right: you *must* do right. It is not merely worse for you to do wrong—the law is, Thou shalt not!

2. Through sorrow. Note here the difference between Adam and Christ. Adam's was a state of satisfied happiness, Christ's was one of noble aspiration: His was a Divine sorrow: there was a secret sadness in the heart of the Son of Man. There is a difference between childhood and age, between Christian and unchristian motives. Out of contemplations such as these we collect a presumption of immortality.

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## LECTURE XXXIII.

1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 1-9. *June 20, 1852.*

THE whole of this Epistle is fragmentary in its character. It is not purely argumentative, like that to the Romans, nor was it written to meet any one cardinal error, like the Epistles to the Galatians and Hebrews; but it arose in the settlement of a multitude of questions which agitated the Corinthian Church. The way in which St. Paul in this chapter enters on new ground is very characteristic of the abrupt style of the Epistle. The solemn topic of the Resurrection is closed, and now a subject of merely local interest is introduced. The apostle gives directions, in the first four verses, respecting a certain charitable collection to be made by the Corinthians, in conjunction with other Gentile churches, for the poor at Jerusalem and in Judæa.

We have here an illustration of one peculiar use of Scripture. The event recorded here has long since passed: the interest which hung around it was merely local: the actors in it have been buried for many centuries: the temporary distress spoken of here was long since relieved: even the apostle himself has written simply and entirely for his own time. And yet the whole account is as living, and fresh, and pregnant with instruction to us to-day as it was to the Corinthians of that age. Reflections crowd upon us while pondering on the history. We understand something of what is meant by inspiration. We watch the principles which are involved in the apostolic mode of meeting the dilemma,

and we find that that which was written for a church at Corinth contains lessons for the Church of all ages. The particular occasion is past, but the principles and the truths remain.

To-day, then, we investigate two points :

- I. The call for charity.
- II. The principle of its exercise.

I. The call for charity. We learn from the 15th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, at the 26th verse, the occasion of this collection. It seems that the Jewish converts in Jerusalem, being excommunicated and persecuted, were in great distress, and that St. Paul summoned the Gentile converts in Achaia, Galatia, and at Rome to alleviate their difficulties. Now observe, first, how all distinctions of race had melted away before Christianity. This was not the first time that collections had been made for Jerusalem. Josephus tells us that they had been sent by foreign Jews to keep up the Temple at Jerusalem—that is, money had been contributed by Jews for a Jewish object. But here was a Jewish object supported by Gentile subscriptions. This was a new thing in the world.

The hard lines of demarkation were fading away forever. Christ lived no longer as the Jew—He had risen as the Man, the Saviour, not of one people, but of the world, and in Him all were one. Henceforth there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female ; but Christ was all.

Observe again: Galatia and Corinth were now interested in the same object. It was not merely Corinth united to Jerusalem, or Galatia to Jerusalem, but Jerusalem, Corinth, and Galatia were linked by a common object to each other. You have seen a magnet applied to a mass of iron filings, and watched the multitude of delicate points all adhering to each other, through the invisible influence which, sent throughout them all, makes each in its turn a magnet. To scattered races and divided peoples, to separate castes and ancient enmities, Christ was the magnet which united all. His Spirit gave to all a common interest, and that is the closest bond of union. As suggested here, the different parts of Christendom were made to feel together. Benumbed and paralyzed till then, the frame of Humanity was suddenly made to throb with a common life.

Now this had been done before by other means which were less sacred. Two hitherto have principally been employed—War and Trade. In earlier times the different tribes of the Roman Republic, even those who were opposing par-

ties in the city, were united on the field of battle; they felt they were warring for the same cause, and they struck as one man for their altars and their homes. Later in history we find that trade united men by mutual interest. We will not injure others, said men, because by so doing we shall injure ourselves. And on this principle the great gathering of the nations last year was a pledge of union. It was a good and great effort in its way, but still it was only an appeal to self-interest.

In a far higher, nobler, and finer way Christianity unites, first to Christ, and then, through Christ, each to the other. We are bound up each in each, not through a common hatred, not through a common interest even, but through a common love. So it was that Galatia and Corinth worked together for Jerusalem, inspired with a common sympathy, a common affection, and therefore the Galatians loved the Corinthians and the Corinthians the Galatians.

Here, however, a remark suggests itself. This has not been realized since, in any degree adequate to the first promise of its youth. This binding together of Corinth, Rome, and Galatia—what has there been like it in after ages? One gleam of sunshine, the prophecy of a glorious noon to come, struck upon the world. But the promise of the day was soon overclouded. So also there has been nothing equal to the outpouring at Pentecost; nor has a similar self-forgetfulness ever characterized the Church since, as in that day when all things were common; nor has any thing like the early miracles arisen since among the messengers of Christ. It would seem as if God gave at the outset, in that large flood of love poured upon the Church, a specimen and foretaste of that which is to be hereafter. Just as on the Transfiguration Mount we catch a glimpse of glory, not to be repeated or realized for ages, which we feel was given to sustain a travailing world through days and years of sickness and of suffering.

Remark how in God's counsels sorrow draws out good. The Jewish Christians suffered from poverty and persecution. Well: kindly feelings awoke to life at Corinth and at Rome; these were the result of the misery at Jerusalem. Pain and sorrow are mysteries. Inexplicable often is it in our life, why we are afflicted; but sometimes the veil is drawn aside, and we see the reason clearly. And here to the Church of Jerusalem, was not all this rich result of beauty and spiritual goodness cheaply purchased? Remember, the sufferers at Jerusalem could not see the meaning of their sorrow. They did not know how many a Greek and Roman was

weekly laying up his store for them: they did not know that an apostle was writing and contriving in their behalf. They could not see how, through their pain, Galatia, and Corinth, and Rome were drawn by cords of love together. They saw only their own distress, they felt only their own forlornness.

Just in the same way we often suffer, and see no good result from it. But, assuredly, we are not suffering in vain: some lesson has been taught; some sympathies have been aroused, some consolation has been given. That mysterious connection which links the universe together has brought, or will bring, good to others out of our suffering. Now here is a new aspect of consolation. That is a common and trite view, though deep in its truth, which reminds us that suffering works out *for us* a weight of glory—which tells how *our* characters are perfected through suffering. There is a higher Christian light to see our pain in: it blesses *others*. My brethren, it is a high lesson to be willing to suffer for *this* cause! This is the blessedness of the suffering of Christ; it is the law of the Cross; it is the vicarious principle pervading life, that, voluntarily or involuntarily, we must suffer for others. If others are benefited involuntarily by our sufferings, then we do no more than the beasts who fulfill the law of their being unconsciously, who yield up their lives unwillingly, and therefore are not blest by it. But if we are willing to bear our woe because we know that good will accrue, we know not how, or why, or when, to others, then we have indeed become partakers of Christ's Spirit, and learnt a godlike lesson. To be willing to bear in order to teach others!—to lose, in order that others may "through us nobler live"—that is to know something of the blessedness He knew.

Again, if this distress came through persecutions, then there was a signal fulfillment of the promise. For here relationships are *representative* only; they do but shadow out realities. Our earthly relationships typify truer spiritual ones. The father after the flesh is often not the one to whom in life we look with the most filial reverence. There is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother. And so, in firm faith, we must move through life, nothing daunting us. *On—onward!* Though the path be dark, we shall not be left lonely—none ever have been.

## II. The principle of the exercise of charity.

We will consider this in its manner and measure:

1. Systematic in manner: It was to be on the first day of the week, each one was to lay by in store as God had

prospered him. That is, instead of waiting for one stirring apostolic appeal, they were to make charity the business of their lives. Week by week they were to build up a sum for St. Paul to send to Jerusalem. This contribution, slowly, systematically gathered, was to be a matter of principle, and not of impulse. It is possible that one burning speech of St. Paul's might have elicited a larger sum. But St. Paul preferred the effects of steady perseverance to those of vehement emotion. For impulse is often mere luxury. I do not say that good impulses are not to be acted on, or that warm emotions are to be cooled; they are given to facilitate benevolence; yet it is quite certain that they may cost very little. To give largely, to strip off a coat to give to a shivering man, to open your purse and richly guerdon a beggar, may, after all, be nothing more than a relief from importunity, or a compact with conscience, or a compromise with laziness.

Now, on the contrary, this systematic plan of St. Paul's costs something, and teaches something. It teaches, first, the habit of a thoughtful life; it reminds us continually that there is something which is owed to God, and therefore is not our own. In this world we are recipients, the pensioners of our Father; and it is well that, by an outward system, we should train our inward spirit to the unforgetful thought of our debt to Him. It is well that we should remember this—not to wake our fear of His austerity, but to kindle our gratitude in answer to His love.

It teaches, secondly, self-denial. It gradually lays the foundation of a life of Christian economy; not that which sacrifices one pleasure for another: for this is but mere prudence; but that which abridges pleasure, in order that we may be able to give to God.

2. The measure of liberality was "as God hath prospered him." Observe, St. Paul establishes a *principle* here, and not a rule. He lays down no rabbinical maxim of one-tenth or one-fourth. He leaves the measure of each man's charity to his own conscience. "Ask thyself," he says to each, "how much owest thou unto thy Lord?"

Besides, a wide margin is here left necessarily for variety of circumstances. God prospers one man in fortune; another man in time; another in talent; and time, talents, power of government, knowledge, keen sympathy, are often better gifts than money. It is a false view which limits charity to alms-giving. "Silver and gold have I none," said St. Peter, when the lame man asked an alms, "but that which I have I give unto thee;" and the man was healed. So now,

often the greatest exercise of charity is where there is *nothing given*, but where the deserving are assisted to support themselves. Often the highest charity is simply to pay liberally for all things had or done for you; because to underpay workmen, and then be bountiful, is not charity. On the other hand, to *give*, when by so doing you support idleness, is most pernicious. No evil prevails so much, or is so sheltered under specious pretexts, as the support of beggars. Yet you can not refuse to give a street-alm if your charity has no other channel: you would feel that refusal in such a case was a mere pretext to save your money. But if your wealth is wisely and systematically given, then the refusal of idle appeals does no harm to the heart.

Now the first principle laid down by St. Paul will explain why the second is not realized. Men do not give as God hath prospered them, because they do not give systematically; that is, they who have most are not they who give most, but the reverse. It is a fact, the more we have the less we give. Search the annals of all societies, and you will find that the large contributions are given by those whose incomes are hundreds, and not thousands. Many are the touching cases known to all clergymen where the savings of a servant, a governess, a workman, have more than equalled the munificence of the rich. So also was St. Paul's experience: The grace of God, he says, was "bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves."

The reason of this strange difference is, that system is easier with little than with much. The man of thousands squanders. Indulgence after indulgence presents itself to him: every impulse is satisfied immediately: he denies himself nothing: he gives as freely when he is touched by a tale of woe, as he indulges when he wants indulgence. But his luxuries and his extra expenditure grow into necessities, and he then complains of his larger liabilities and establishment. Yet withal, it would be a startling thing if well-meaning persons, who say they *can not* give, were only to compute how much annually is spent in that mere waste which the slightest self-denial would have spared.

Now let me appeal to those who really wish to do right in this thing. It is not my duty, from this chapter, to make a stirring appeal to your conscience, but simply to assist with advice that desire of liberality which is already exist-



ing, but which exists without expedients or plans of action. St. Paul's principle is the only safe or true one. Systematize your charity. Save, by surrendering superfluities first. Feel that there is a sacred fund, which will be made less by every unnecessary expense. Let us learn Christian economy first. Next we shall, by God's grace, learn Christian self-denial. For the Macedonians gave not out of their abundance, but out of their deep poverty.

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## LECTURE XXXIV.

1 CORINTHIANS xvi. 10-24. *June 27, 1852.*

TO-DAY we close our exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians by gathering together the salutations which are contained in the conclusion.

In going through this Epistle we can not fail to have observed that it is altogether fragmentary. This was the natural result of its character, since it was a reply to various questions arising out of the peculiar state of the Corinthian Church. But the conclusion, as we might expect, is even more fragmentary than the rest. It is simply made up of certain information respecting St. Paul's movements, certain salutations, certain personal memorials and notices—and a brief reminder of the first principles interspersed throughout the foregoing chapters. It will, therefore, be necessary for us in this place to connect them together as well as we can, not expecting to find any natural division to facilitate the making of a plan, or to assist the memory in combining this scattered Epistle into a whole.

First, we notice the information given us respecting the apostle's movements. Now we find him telling the Corinthians that he hoped to visit them, and to winter with them, but not yet, for he was to stay at Ephesus until Pentecost. I only mention this, in order to call attention to the law of the apostolic life. He remained there, he says, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." So it was not pleasure but duty which kept him there. Ephesus was his post, and at Ephesus he would stay. Moreover, the very circumstance which to many would have been an inducement to depart, was with St. Paul a strong one to remain: there were "many adversaries," and he was there to take his part in danger. Now, in order to understand the true martyr spirit, let us compare his behavior

in the 19th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, at the time of the public uproar, and his own strong expression, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus," in the 15th chapter of this Epistle, and we shall see at once that his feeling was: There is danger—well then, I will stay.

Secondly, we make a remark respecting salutations generally. This Epistle has many, but they are not so numerous as in that to the Romans. In both of them individuals are mentioned by name. It was no mere general assurance of attachment he gave them, but one of his personal knowledge and affection.

1. Remark that with St. Paul personal considerations were not lost in general philanthropy: that because he entertained regard for the churches, and for bodies of men, he did not on this account ignore the individuals composing them. It is common enough to profess great interest and zeal for humanity, whilst there is indifference all the time about individual men. It is common enough to be zealous about a cause, about some scheme of social good, and yet to be careless respecting individual welfare. But St. Paul's love was from Christ's own Spirit. It was love to the Church generally, and besides, it was love to Aquila and Priscilla. And is not this, too, the nature of God's love, who provides for the universe, and yet spends an infinity of care on the fibre of a leaf.

2. Remark also the value of the courtesies of life. There are many minds which are indifferent to such things, and fancy themselves above them. It is a profound remark of Prescott's, that "liberty is dependent upon forms." Did not the slow, solemn change in the English constitution, and our freedom from violent subversions, arise from the almost superstitious way in which precedent has been consulted in the manner of every change? But what is of more importance to remember is, that love is dependent upon forms—courtesy of etiquette guards and protects courtesy of heart. How many hearts have been lost irrecoverably, and how many averted eyes and cold looks have been gained, from what seemed perhaps but a trifling negligence of forms!

There are three persons chiefly in reference to whom these personal notices are made—Timothy, Apollos, and the household of Stephanas.

I. In the tenth verse—"If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do"—he bespeaks respect for him, official

respect, and personal consideration. It is chiefly on this personal consideration that I wish to dwell. "Let him be without fear—let no man despise him." Now consider the circumstances in which Timothy was placed. He was young in years, and he was a recent convert to Christianity. He lived in a day when the Christian profession was despised and persecuted. There was much to make him "fear." He—a young teacher—was coming to a city where gifts were unduly and idolatrously revered, and where even the authority of one like St. Paul was liable to be treated lightly, if he did not possess the gifts and graces of Attic oratory. There must, therefore, have been much to make it likely that he would be despised. Think how, without a friend like St. Paul to throw his mantle over him, Timothy's own modesty would have silenced him, and how his young enthusiasm might have been withered by ridicule or asperity!

In this light, St. Paul's pleading is an encouragement of goodness while yet in its tender bud. From this instance we are enabled to draw a lesson for all ages. There is a danger of our paralyzing young enthusiasm by coldness, by severity, by sneers, by want of sympathy. There are few periods in life more critical than that in which sensibilities and strong feeling begin to develop themselves in young people. The question is about to be decided whether what is at present merely romantic feeling is to become generous devotion, and to end by maturing into self-denial; or whether it is to remain only a sickly sentiment, and by reaction degenerate into a bitter and a sneering tone. And there are, perhaps, few countries in which this danger is so great, and so much to be guarded against, as here in England.

Nowhere is feeling met with so little sympathy as here—nowhere is enthusiasm so much kept down—nowhere do young persons learn so soon the fashionable tone of strongly admiring nothing, wondering at nothing, reverencing nothing; and nowhere does a young man so easily fall into the habit of laughing at his own best and purest feelings. And this was a danger which the Apostle Paul knew well, and could not overlook. He foresaw the risk of paralyzing that young and beautiful enthusiasm of Timothy by the party spirit of Corinth, by the fear of the world's laugh, or by the recoil with which a young man, dreading to be despised, hides what is best and noblest in himself, and consequently becomes hard and commonplace. In earlier days, Apollos himself ran the same risk. He set out preaching all the truth that he knew enthusiastically. It was very poor truth, lamentably incomplete, embracing only John's bap-

tism—that is, the doctrine which John taught. Had the Christians met him with sneers—had they said, “This young upstart does not preach the Gospel”—there had been either a great teacher blighted, or else a strong mind embittered into defiance and heresy. But from this he was delivered by the love and prudence of Aquila and Priscilla, who, we read, “took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” They made allowances: they did not laugh at his imperfections, nor damp his enthusiasm; they united him with themselves; they strengthened what was weak; they lopped away what was luxuriant; they directed rightly what was energetic.

Happy the man who has been true to the ideal of his youth, and has been strong enough to work out in real life the plan which pleased his childish thought! Happy he who is not ashamed of his first enthusiasm, but looks back to it with natural piety, as to the parent of what he now is! But for one of whom this is true, how many are there whom the experience of life has soured and rendered commonplace? How many, who were once touched by the sunlight of hope, have grown cold, settled down into selfishness, or have become mere domestic men, stifled in wealth, or lost in pleasure?

Above all things, therefore, let us beware of that cold, supercilious tone, which blights what is generous, and affects to disbelieve all that is disinterested and unworldly. Let us guard against the *esprit moqueur*—the Mephistopheles spirit, which loves and reverences nothing.

II. “As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.” Upon this I will make two remarks:

1. The perfect absence of all mean jealousy in St. Paul’s mind. Compare this passage with his earnest rebuke of the party of Apollos in the first chapter. On reading that, it might appear natural to say, “Oh, he can not bear a rival!” But behold, it was zeal for Christ, and not jealousy of Apollos. With Apollos he felt only hearty fellowship, for he greatly “desired him to come to them with the brethren.” These are some of the fine touches by which we learn what that sublime apostle was, and what the grace of God had made him. Here, again, we see another advantage of our expository course, enabling us to trace and note down many delicate touches of character that might otherwise easily be passed over.

2. Let us pause to admire the apostle's earnest desire to make Apollos stand well with the Corinthians. A meaner spirit, feeling that Apollos was a dangerous rival, would either have left his conduct unexplained, or would have caught at, and been even glad of, the suspicion resting on him: *why* did he stay away? But St. Paul would leave no misunderstanding to smoulder. He simply stated that Apollos had reasons for not coming: "But he *will* come." This is magnanimity and true delicacy of heart.

III. The house of Stephanas: "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." St. Paul tells them, in the next verse, to "submit themselves unto such"—to respect them. See, then, what Christianity is—Equality: yes, but not levelling. God's universe is built on subordination: so is God's Church. The spirit of the world's liberty says, "Let no man lord it over you;" but the spirit of the Gospel liberty says, "Submit yourselves one to another." Observe, however, another thing: they had addicted *themselves* to the ministry. Who had called them to it? No one, except God by an inward fitness. Yet, knowing this, St. Paul says, "Submit yourselves." There are certain things to be done in this world which require peculiar instruments and peculiar qualifications. A call from God to do such a work is often shown by a willingness to do it: a readiness to stand forward and take the lead. When this is the case, and such men try to do good, they are often met with innumerable hindrances. Take as instances, Howard and Mrs. Fry, who encountered nothing but difficulties; they were thwarted in all they undertook, and hindered on every side.

Now St. Paul says, This is wrong; you ought rather to help such. Let them take the lead—follow in their wake, and do not mar the work by any petty jealousy. "Submit yourselves rather unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboreth." Observe, then, it is as much an apostolic duty to obey persons who have "addicted themselves" from inward fitness, as it is to respect an outward constitutional authority.

Lastly, the Epistle concludes with the repetition of a few first principles. As the postscript often contains the gist of a letter—the last earnest thought, the result of a strong effort at recollection in order to leave nothing important unsaid—so we may here expect to find gathered to a point some of the essential principles of Christianity as a parting request.

Accordingly we find the apostle, in the 13th verse, saying, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong"—by which he enforces the duty of manliness. In the 14th verse, "Let all your things be done with charity." The apostle's incessant exhortation to love is again pressed upon them in the most comprehensive form. And in the 22d verse, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran atha." By which the rule of sympathy and that of antipathy is pointed out. Respecting the first of these, I address young men :

If you think Christianity a feeble, soft thing, ill adapted to call out the manlier features of character, read here, "Quit you like men." Remember, too, "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." He who conquers passion in its might is every inch a man ! Say what you will, the Christian conqueror is the only one who deserves the name.

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LECTURES  
ON  
THE SECOND EPISTLE.

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LECTURE XXXV.

2 CORINTHIANS i. 1-14. *July 11, 1852.*

THE character of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians differs considerably from that of the First. In the former Epistle a variety of separate questions are discussed; some relating to doctrine—for example, the Resurrection; others to moral conduct, as concerning the incestuous Corinthian; others respecting ceremonies; others of casuistry, as the eating of meats offered to idols; and others regarding order in the Church, as, for example, the investigation of the value of spiritual gifts. To all these St. Paul replies, by referring each particular question back to some broad principle of Christianity.

But in the Second Epistle a more personal tone is observable. It seems that certain charges had been alleged against him, probably in consequence of the severe and uncompromising way in which he had blamed their divisions and their sectarian spirit; and now, instead of being blamed by one party, he found himself accused by all. They had charged him with harshness to the incestuous person, with fickleness, with arrogance in his ministry; they said he had assumed a tone of authority which ill became him, and which was not consistent with the insignificance of his personal appearance. Accordingly, we notice that a very peculiar tone pervades this Epistle. It is the language of injured, and yet most affectionate, expostulation. One by one he refutes all the charges; one by one he calmly sets them aside; and yet you can not read the Epistle without perceiving that, with all the firm manliness of his character, he had been wounded to

the very quick. But not one word of resentment falls from his pen, only once or twice sentences of affectionate bitterness, as, for example: "For what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong."

Our exposition to-day will embrace the first fourteen verses; and these divide themselves generally into two subjects of consideration:

I. The consolations of affliction.

II. The testimony of conscience.

I. Now the very terms of this division show the personal tone of the Epistle. His own afflictions, his own conscience—these are the subjects. We shall see the difference we spoke of by comparing these verses with the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses of the first chapter of the First Epistle. *There* he thanks God for *their* grace, *their* gifts, the testimony of Christ in *them*; while *here* we evidently feel the heart of the apostle himself smarting under the sense of injustice and misconception—the want of fair treatment and of sympathy. Very naturally, therefore, he turns to the consolations of suffering, and what suffering means. It is the great question of thoughtful spirits not merely, How can affliction be got rid of as soon as possible? but rather, Why is it? what does it mean? This is the subject of the wondrous Book of Job: from this are born the first earnest questionings of religion in all hearts and in all ages. The apostle then represents affliction—

1. As a school of comfort (vs. 4, 5); 2. as a school of assurance (ver. 10); 3. and as a school of sympathy (ver. 4).

1. As a school of comfort.

Affliction and comfort—a remarkable connection of two apparent opposites, and yet how indissoluble! For heavenly comfort—heavenly, as distinguished from mere earthly gladness and earthly happiness—is inseparable from suffering. It was so in the life of Christ; it was immediately after the temptation that angels came and ministered to Him: it was in His agony that the angel appeared from heaven strengthening Him: it was in the preparation for the Cross that the Voice was heard, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again;" and it was on the Cross that the depth of human loneliness, and the exceeding bitter cry, were changed for the trustful calm of a Spirit filled with His Father's love: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And as in His life, so it is in ours, these two are never separated, for the first earnest questions of personal and deep religion are



ever born out of personal suffering. As if God had said: "In the sunshine thou canst not see Me; but when the sun is withdrawn the stars of heaven shall appear." As with Job: "Not in prosperity, but in the whirlwind will I answer thee: there thou shalt hear my Voice, and see my Form, and know that thy Redeemer liveth."

### 2. A school of assurance.

There is nothing so hard to force upon the soul as the conviction that life is a real, earnest, awful thing. Only see the butterfly life of pleasure men and women are living day by day, hour by hour, flitting from one enjoyment to another; living, working, spending, and exhausting themselves for nothing else but the seen, and temporal, and unreal. And yet these are undying souls, with feelings and faculties which death can not rob them of; their chance swiftly passing, and no second chance forever! Now pain and sorrow force upon the spirit the feeling of reality.

And again: nothing is harder than to believe in God. To do just this, simply to believe in God—in the history of each individual soul, there is no page so difficult to learn as that. When you are well, when hours are pleasant and friends abundant, it is an easy thing to speculate about God, to argue about the Trinity, to discuss the Atonement, to measure the mysteries of existence.

Christian men! when sorrow comes, speculation will not do. It is like casting the lead from mere curiosity, when you have a sound, strong ship in deep water. But when she is grinding on the rocks! Oh! we sound for God when the soul is on the rocks. For God becomes a living God, a reality, a home, when once we feel that we are helpless and homeless in this world without Him.

### 3. A school of sympathy.

There are some who are Christians, but notwithstanding are rough, hard, and rude: you can not go to them for sympathy. You can not confide the more delicate difficulties of the soul to them. Theirs is that rude health which knows not of infirmities: theirs is that strong sound sense which can not see how a doubt can enter the spirit and make it dark; nay, can not understand why there should be a doubt at all. They have not suffered. But tenderness is got by suffering, both physical and mental. This was Christ's own qualification for sympathy: "We have not an high-priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are." So that, would *you* be a Barnabas? would *you* give something beyond commonplace consolation to a wounded spirit? would

*you* minister to doubt, to disappointed affection, to the loneliness of life? then “you must suffer being tempted.” Now here we have a very peculiar source of consolation in suffering. It is the same which we spoke of in the First Epistle, when the subject of the contribution for the poor of Jerusalem came before us. Their suffering had taught many lessons to the Christians of Corinth and Galatia, had linked the Gentile churches together in a common cause, had unconsciously drawn out sympathy and self-denial, and had kindled into a living flame the apostolical energies of St. Paul. So here: the thought that the apostle’s suffering benefited others, soothed him in his afflictions; and this is quite a peculiar consolation—one, too, which is essentially Christian. Thus we see that Christianity is the true philosophy, after all. Consider only how moralists, how the old Stoicism, had groped about in the dark to solve the mystery of pain and grief; telling you it *must* be—that it is the common lot, and therefore to be borne; that it benefits and perfects you.

Yes, that is true enough. But Christianity says much more to you; it says, Your suffering blesses others: it teaches *you* sympathy; it gives *them* firmness and example, and reminds them of their frailty. How high a truth! for here is the law of the Cross: “No man dieth to himself;” for his pain and loss is *for* others, and, unconsciously to himself, brings with it, *to* others, joy and gain.

## II. The testimony of conscience.

Met by these charges from his enemies, and even from his friends, the apostle falls back on his own conscience. Let us explain what he means by the testimony of conscience. He certainly does not mean faultlessness; for he says, “Of sinners I am chief.” And St. John, in a similar spirit, declares that none can boast of faultlessness: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” And here St. Paul is not speaking of his own personal character, but of his ministry; and, again, he is not speaking of the blamelessness of his ministry, but of its success. No: it was not faultlessness St. Paul meant by the testimony of conscience, but this—integrity, moral earnestness in his work; he had been straightforward in his ministry, and his worst enemies could be refuted if they said that he was insincere.

Now this sincerity excluded, first, all subtle manœuvring, all indirect modes of teaching. The Corinthians said he had caught them with guile. He said he had not: there had been no concealment of views, no doctrine of reserve, no Jesuitry nor subtlety of reasoning in all his teaching: his

conscience told him that. Yet many would have thought this subtlety the best mode of dealing with the bigoted Jews and the intricate and versatile Greek intellect. St. Paul might have said: "These views about the Sabbath will offend the Jews; these declarations of the Christ crucified will be unpleasant to the Greeks." Instead of which, in simplicity and godly sincerity, St. Paul preached the Cross. And in this, let men say what they please, the apostle was true to the nature of men. One of the keenest of Eastern diplomats has left it on record that subtlety fails in India; that there manœuvring politicians have ever been those who were most easily outwitted. For none succeed like the straightforward, blunt, simple Englishman, sailor or soldier, as long as he *is* simple. Be sure that straightforwardness is more than a match at last for all the involved windings of deceit. In your daily life, do what you feel right, say what you feel true, and leave, with faith and boldness, the consequences to God. Force men to feel of you, "Yes, he has faults, but they lie on the surface; he may be impetuous, hasty, mistaken, but what he says he thinks; there is no *arrière pensée*, no acting in his character with a view to personal interests."

St. Paul's sincerity excluded, also, all teaching upon the ground of mere authority. It is commonly taught that this or that truth is to be believed because an inspired apostle taught it. It is often said, It is incredible; nevertheless you must believe it, because it was accredited by miracles. But the apostle never taught on this ground. Nay, even Christ Himself in all His ministry did not teach any doctrine on the ground of authority. He simply said: "If I say the truth, why do ye not believe?" "They that are of the truth hear my voice;" "Wisdom is justified of her children." In the same way spoke St. Paul. The truth he had taught commended itself to their consciences; and so, too, throughout all his instruction, he says, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." And again: "We use great plainness of speech."

This was the secret of the apostle's wondrous power. It was because he had used no adroitness, nor craft, nor any threat of authority, but stood simply on the truth, evident like the sunlight to all who had eyes to see, that thousands, go where he would, "acknowledged" what he taught. There are some men who thus interpret us to ourselves, who make us more really ourselves, from whose writings and words we feel a flash which kindles all into light at once. Of the words of such men we do not say, "How can they be proved?" We say: "It is the truth of God, and needs no proof." And such is our feeling as we read the word of inspiration.

## LECTURE XXXVI.

2 CORINTHIANS i. 15-22. July 18, 1852.

THE whole tone of this Epistle is apologetical—it is defensive throughout. In other Epistles, the main subject being some Christian truth or truths, it is only incidentally that we ever learn any thing respecting St. Paul himself. But in this the main subject is St. Paul and St. Paul's conduct; and yet from chapter to chapter he digresses from his own conduct to some great principle which was dearer far to him than himself. Of course, generally, the value of this Epistle is extremely great. But its special value consists in two things:

1. It exhibits the way in which a Christian may defend himself when maligned or misrepresented. No doubt it is very true that, in the end, character will clear itself; and a popular phrase says, with some truth, that the character which can not defend itself is best left without defense. Yet this may be pressed too far. An uncontradicted slander is believed readily, and often for long; and, meanwhile, influence is crippled or lost. Conceive what might have ensued had St. Paul not met the slanders against his character with denial at once! For few persons take the trouble to sift a charge which is not denied. Now, in the exposition of this Epistle, our attention (*inter alia*) will be frequently directed to the tone and manner in which the inspired apostle defends himself.

2. This Epistle is valuable as peculiarly forcing our attention to the fact of the humility of St. Paul. In remembering the inspiration of the Apostles, we sometimes forget that they felt, thought, and wrote as men—that the Holy Ghost spoke through them, mixing the Divine with the human—that inspiration flowed through roused human feelings and passions. Hence there is a peculiar value in an Epistle whose main character is personal.

The link of connection between the subject of last Sunday and that of to-day is to be found in the 12th and 13th verses, in which the apostle maintains the openness and straightforwardness of his ministry. He had concealed nothing, he had used no reserve or duplicity. Nor had he

taught truth to them on the mere ground of authority, but *as* truth—that which was clear and self-evident when declared; that which they received and acknowledged.

Next he comes to a particular defense against a charge of failure of promise. The charge against him was one of duplicity or double-dealing, and this both in his public teaching, and also in his personal intercourse. His defense on the first count of the charge we have already dealt with. We come to-day to the charge as respects his personal deportment towards the Corinthians. He was, they said, a man who would teach plausibly, meaning something else all the while; all was not said out boldly by him. He was a man who would make a promise for a momentary purpose, and then break it for his own private ends. The alleged proof on which the charge was founded was, that he had promised to come to Corinth, and he had not come. The apostle's reply includes a general defense against a general charge; and a defense in the particular case of apparent insincerity. He admits the fact—he had intended to go to Corinth; and he had not fulfilled his intention. But he denies the inference of trifling with his word; or that it was with him "yea, yea"—and then with a juggler's dexterity, "nay, nay."

The broad ground on which St. Paul denies the possibility of such conduct is, that he was a spiritual Christian. He could not do so, because it would be acting according to the flesh—that is, from interest, ambition, worldly policy, or private passions. Whereas, he was in Christ; and Christ was the Christian's yea, the living truth; and the word is but the expression of the life. Now what Christ was the Christian is, in degree. Christ, says St. Paul, was true; and God has established us in Christ. Therefore, fickleness, duplicity, or deceit, are impossible to us.

Such is the apostle's argument. Let us notice how, even in apparent trifles, St. Paul fell back on main principles: "The Gospel goes into the life: Christ is yea, therefore be ye true." So, in another place: "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds." He does not teach veracity as a separate virtue, but veracity as springing out of Christianity—a part of truth; to be veracious was simply the result of a true life: the life being true, the words and sentiments must be veracious.

Let us also see why "being in Christ" makes caprice and instability impossible. Consider what caprice is—it comes from not knowing one's own mind. A fickle-minded man's inner being is like an undisciplined mob—first one voice of

passion, then another is heard—of interest, of ambition, or policy. “A double-minded man,” says St. James, is unstable in all his ways;” “He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea.” And we read in Genesis: “Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.” A man who is governed by self, whose desires are legion, “purposes according to the flesh,” and his yea is nay as often as yea. Now what is the Gospel of Christ? What is it to be “established in Christ”—“anointed?” It is freedom from self, from all selfish and personal wishes. It is to say, “Not as I will, but as thou wilt:” it is to place the right uppermost, and not pleasure. It is to be delivered from those passions whose name is Legion, and to “sit at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in our right mind.” Hence a blow is struck at once at the root of instability. It is as if a ship tossed about by a hundred gusts of whirlwind were to feel suddenly a strong breeze blowing from one point, and at once to right and go steadily before the wind.

A man who is free from the manifold motives of self-will moves like the sun—steady, majestic, with no variableness, neither shadow of turning. His course can be calculated. You can not calculate the quarter from whence the wind will blow to-morrow, but you can calculate the precise moment when the sun will reach a particular point. Such is the description of a Christian. St. Paul was a Christian: therefore he *could not* be tricky, or manœuvre, or do underhand things: the Spirit of Christ was in his heart. Observe, too, that he does not assert his truth because of his apostleship, but because of his Christianity; for he associates the Corinthians with himself—“us with you.”

But we!—we!—how does this describe us?—changeful, vacillating, many of us tempted to subterfuges, unsteadiness, even to insincerity? Well, it *is* the portrait of a Christian; and, so far as it does not describe us, we are not Christians, we have not the Spirit—so far we *need* that Spirit to redeem us from self. For it is redemption in Christ from self, and that alone, which can make us true.

Let us note two things here, by-the-way:

1. Remember that the apostle calls this truthfulness—this gift of the Spirit—“God’s seal” marking His own, and an “earnest.” The true are his; none else.

Let us distinguish between an “earnest” and a “pledge.” A “pledge” is something different in kind, given in assurance of something else, as when Judah gave his staff and ring in pledge for a lamb which he promised should be given afterwards. But an “earnest” is part of that thing

which is eventually to be given; as when the grapes were brought from Canaan, or as when a purchase is made, and part of the money is paid down at once.

Now baptism is a pledge of Heaven—"a sign and seal." The Spirit of Truth in us is an earnest of Heaven, it is Heaven begun. Therefore it is a foolish question to ask, Will the true, pure, loving, holy man be saved? He *is* saved; he *has* Heaven: it is in him now—an earnest of more hereafter; God has shown him the grapes of Canaan; God has given him part of the inheritance, all of which is hereafter to be his own.

2. The solemn character of the relationship between ministers and congregations (ver. 14).

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### LECTURE XXXVII.

2 CORINTHIANS i. 23, 24; ii. 1-5. July 25, 1852.

WE have seen that a double charge had been alleged against St. Paul—of duplicity both as respected his ministry and also as respected his personal character. The charge against his personal character had been based on the non-fulfillment of his promise to visit Corinth; and we found his defense was twofold:

1. General—resting on the moral impossibility of one in Christ being willfully untrue; and this was our subject last Sunday.

2. Special—and this is our business to-day. This part of the defense extends from the 23d verse of the first chapter to the 5th verse of the second.

The first reason for the non-fulfillment of his promise was one of mercy: "Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that to *spare* you, I came not as yet unto Corinth." By "spare" the apostle means—to save them from the sharp censure their lax morality would have necessitated. They had treated this great crime which had been committed amongst them as a trifle; they had even boasted of it as a proof of their Christian liberty: and had St. Paul gone to Corinth while they were unrepentant, his apostolic duty would have required from him severe animadversion. Now it was to spare them this that he changed his intention. It was no caprice, no fickleness, it was simply tenderness to them; by which we learn two things respecting St. Paul's character,

1. He was not one of those who love to be censors of the faults of others. There are some who are ever finding fault: a certain appearance of superiority is thereby gained, for blame implies the power of scanning from a height. There are political fault-finders who lament over the evil of the times, and demagogues who blame every power that is. There are ecclesiastical fault-finders, who can see no good anywhere in the Church, they can only expose abuses. There are social fault-finders, who are ever on the watch for error, who complain of cant and shams, and who yet provide no remedy. There are religious fault-finders, who lecture the poor, or form themselves into associations, in which they rival the inquisitors of old. Now all this was contrary to the spirit of St. Paul. Charity with him was not a fine word: it was a part of his very being: he had that love "which thinketh no evil, which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but in the truth, which beareth, believeth, hopeth all things." It pained him to inflict the censure which would give pain to others: "to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth."

2. St. Paul was not one of those who love to rule: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith." He had nothing within him of the mere priest.

Let us draw a difference between the mere priest and the minister. Both are anxious for men's salvation, but the mere priest wishes to save them by his own official powers and prerogatives; while the minister wishes to help them to save themselves. Now see how exactly this verse expresses the distinction between these two spirits: "Dominion over your faith:" there is the very spirit of the priest. "Helpers of your joy:" there is the spirit of the minister; a desire, not to be a ruler, but a helper; not that *he* shall hold men up, but that they shall "*stand*."

This is the great quarrel between Paganism and Christianity, between Romanism and Protestantism, between the proud pretensions of mere Churchmanship and spiritual Christianity. How are men saved? Directly through Christ? or indirectly by Christ through the priest? By personal faith? or by the miraculous instrumentality of the sacraments? What is the Christian minister? Is he one whose manipulations and meddling are necessary to make faith and moral goodness acceptable, and to impart to them a spiritual efficacy? or is he simply one whose office is to serve his brethren, by giving to them such superior knowledge as he may possess, or such superior influence as his character may command? The apostle's decision here is plain; and it is marvellous how any can read his writings and support the "priestly view."



But do not mistake the meaning of the word "priest;" as used by the Church of England, it is simply a corrupted form of *presbyter*. In her formularies she does not claim sacrificial or priestly powers for her officers, but only ministerial ones. Observe, therefore, it is not a question of words, but of things: Priestcraft is a spirit, a temper of mind; and does not depend upon a name. It is not because a man is called a priest, that therefore he is unlike St. Paul; nor because a man is named a minister, that therefore he is free from the priestly temper. In Rome, where all are called priests, you have had the humble, servant-like spirit of many a Fénelon. Among Dissenters, where the word "priest" is strenuously avoided, there has been many a proud, priestly spirit, domineering and overbearing. Such men are willing—nay, zealous—that others should be saved, provided it is only through them; and hence their estimate of goodness in others is a peculiar one. Those who accept their teaching, and admit their authority, they call humble, meek, Christlike. Those who dare to doubt, who seek truth for themselves, not blindly *their* truth, they call latitudinarians, proud, heretics, presumptuous, and self-willed. Thus the priestly estimate of saintliness is always a peculiar one, since the main element of it is obedience and submission, and a blind subservience to individual teaching.

Besides, these men are always persecutors: the assumption of dominion over men's faith necessarily makes them so, although in different ways. In some ages they burn, in others curse, in others they affix stigmas and names on their fellow-ministers, and bid people beware of them as dangerous teachers. Now I give you a criterion: Whenever you find a man trying to believe, and to make others believe, himself to be necessary to their salvation and progress, saying, "Except ye be circumcised, except ye believe what I teach, or except I baptize you, ye can not be saved," there you have a priest, whether he be called minister, clergyman, or layman. But whenever you find a man anxious and striving to make men independent of himself, yea, independent of all *men*; desiring to help them—not to rest on his authority, but—to stand on their own faith, not his; that they may be elevated, instructed, and educated; wishing for the blessed time to come when his services shall be unnecessary, and the prophecy be fulfilled—"They shall no more teach every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest"—*there* you have the Christian minister, the servant, the "helper of your joy."

The second reason St. Paul alleges for not coming to Cor-

inth is apparently a selfish one: to spare himself pain. And he distinctly says, he had written to pain *them*, in order that *he* might have joy. Very selfish, as at first it sounds: but if we look closely into it, it only sheds a brighter and fresher light upon the exquisite unselfishness and delicacy of St. Paul's character. He desired to save himself pain, because it gave them pain. He desired joy for himself, because his joy was theirs. He will not separate himself from them for a moment: he will not be the master, and they the school: it is not *I* and *you*, but *we*; "my joy is your joy, as your grief was my grief." And so knit together are we beloved—minister and congregation!

Here it is best to explain the 5th verse, which in our version is badly punctuated. If we read it thus, it is clear: "If any have caused grief he hath not grieved *me*, but in part (that I may not overcharge) you all."

To resume: It was not to pain them merely that he wrote, but because joy, deep and permanent, was impossible without pain; as the extraction of a thorn by a tender father gives a deeper joy in love to the child. It was not to inflict sorrow, "not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." Again, it was not to save himself pain merely that he did not come, but to save them that pain which would have given him pain. Here there is a canon for the difficult duty and right, of blame. When—to what extent—how—shall we discharge that difficult duty, so rarely done with gracefulness? To blame is easy enough, with some it is all of a piece with the hardness of their temperament; but to do this delicately—how shall we learn that? I answer, Love! and then say what you will; men will bear any thing if love be there. If not, all blame, however just, will miss its mark: and St. Paul showed this in the 4th verse, where love lies at the root of his censure. Nothing but love can teach us how to understand such a sentence as this from a higher Heart than his—"He looked round about Him in *anger*, being *grieved* at the hardness of their hearts."

Here, too, arises an occasion for considering the close connection between ministers and congregations. Let us compare the 14th verse of the first chapter—"We are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus"—with the 3d verse of the second chapter—"Having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all"—and what a lesson of comfort shall we not learn! But much mistake is made in representing the case of ministers now as parallel to that of the Apostles, and claiming, as is sometimes

done, the same reverence for their words as the Apostles claimed rightfully for themselves. Much mistake, too, is made in drawing the parallel, or expecting it in the mutual affection of ministers and people. For gifts differ, and more than all, circumstances of trial differ; and it is only when dangers are undergone together, like those of the Apostles, that the cases can be parallel. Doubtless in the early Church, and among the persecuted Covenanters, similar instances have occurred, but rarely do they happen in prosperous times.

Yet let me call attention to one point, in which the connection is equally solemn. I waive the question of personal affection and private influence. In the public ministry of a Church, week by week, a congregation listens to one man's teaching; year by year, a solemn connection is thus formed; for so thoughts are infused, perforce absorbed. They grow in silence, vegetate, and bear fruit in the life and practice of the congregation; and a minister may even trace his modes of thinking in his people's conversation—not as mere phrases learnt by rote, but as living seed which has germinated in them. A very solemn thing! for what is so solemn as to have that part of a man which is his most real self—his thoughts and faith—grow into others, and become part of their being! Well, that will be his rejoicing in the judgment-day; for that harvest he will put in his claim. "We are your rejoicing." It was to be *theirs* that St. Paul had taught them in simplicity and godly sincerity, truly and fearlessly. It was to be *his* that spiritual thoughts and contrite feelings had been through him infused into them, and this though they partially denied it. Still, deny it as they might, they could not rob him of his harvest.

My Christian brethren, may that mutual rejoicing be yours and mine in the day of Jesus Christ!

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### LECTURE XXXVIII.

2 CORINTHIANS ii. 6-11. *August 1, 1852.*

THE main defense of the Apostle against the charge of fickleness in the non-fulfillment of his promise was, that he had abstained from going to Corinth in order to spare them the sharp rebuke he must have administered had he gone thither. A great crime had been committed: the Church had been compromised, more especially as some of the Co-

Corinthians had defended the iniquity on the ground of liberty, and St. Paul had stayed away after giving his advice, that not he, but they themselves, might do the work of punishment. He gave sentence—that the wicked person should be put away, but he wished them to execute the sentence. For it was a matter of greater importance to St. Paul that the Corinthians should feel rightly the necessity of punishment, than merely that the offender should be punished. It was not to vindicate *his* authority that he wrote, but that they should feel the authority of right: and the Corinthians obeyed. They excommunicated the incestuous person; for the Epistle of the apostle stirred up their languid consciences into active exercise. Accordingly, he applauds their conduct, and recommends them now to forgive the offender whom they had punished; so that, in this section, we have St. Paul's views respecting—

I. The Christian idea of punishment.

II. The Christian idea of absolution.

I. The Christian idea of punishment includes in it, first, the reformation of the offender.

This is the first and most natural object of punishment; and we infer it to have been part of St. Paul's intention, because when this end had been attained, he required that punishment should cease: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment." Now herein consists the peculiar spirit of Christianity, that whereas the ancient system of law sacrificed the individual to the society, and feeble philanthropy would sacrifice society to the individual, Christianity would save both. It respects the decencies of life and its rights: it says the injurer must suffer: but it says, too, he also is a living soul, we must consider him: we must punish, so that he shall be made not worse, but better. So it was not only the dignity of the Corinthian Church that St. Paul thought of: he thought also of the fallen, guilty state of his spirit who had degraded that Church. He punished him that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The second thing included in this idea is the purification of society. Punishment was also necessary for this reason—that sin committed with impunity corrupts the body of men to which the sinner belongs. This St. Paul declares in the First Epistle: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Now the purification of society is effected partly by example, and partly by removal of the evil. The discipline by which this removal was effected was called excommunication. At *that* time, apostolic excommunication represented

to the world God's system of punishment. I do not say that it does so *now*, for the Church and the World have become so mixed, Church and State so trench upon each other's functions, that we know not where the division is. But I conceive that in early times the Church discipline was representative of the true idea of punishment: clearly St. Paul thought it was so. He did not think of extending it beyond the Church, for his idea of the Church was that of a pure society in the world, representing what the world should be; and so he does not require this separation to be rigidly enforced with respect to worldly men. This point is dwelt on in the 5th chapter of the First Epistle, in the 10th verse, and also in the 13th verse of the 12th chapter. For God judged those without, while the Church, God's representative, judged and exhibited this principle of punishment on those within.

These two—to reform, and to serve as an example, are the only views of punishment which are found in the popular notion of it. But if we think deeper on the subject, we shall find, I believe, that there is another idea in punishment which can not be lost sight of. It is this—that punishment is the expression of righteous indignation: God's punishment is the expression of God's indignation, man's punishment is the expression of man's indignation. In the 5th verse of this chapter, as explained once before, St. Paul evidently thought that the guilty man had grieved—that is, offended—him partly, and partly the whole Church. Accordingly, their punishment of him was an expression of their indignation, and this is clear from the 11th verse of the 7th chapter, in which we must mark particularly the word “revenge,” and compare it with the text of Rom. xiii. 4—“a revenger to execute wrath”—where the word is used, not in its evil meaning, but in the sense of righteous resentment expressing itself in punishment. For there is a right feeling in human nature which we call resentment: it exists equally in the best and the worst natures: although in the worst it becomes malice. It existed in Christ Himself, for it is not a peculiarity of *fallen* human nature, but it is an inseparable element of human nature itself. Now let us mark what follows from this: Man is the image of God: all spirits are of the same family. So there is something in God which corresponds with that which we call resentment, stripped, of course, of all emotion, selfishness, or fury.

It is for this reason that we should strongly object to explain away those words of Scripture, “the wrath of God:” “God is angry with the wicked every day:” “The wrath of

God is revealed from heaven." These sayings contain a deep and awful truth. God's punishment is God's wrath against sin; and is not merely the consequence of lifeless laws, but the expression of the feeling of a living spirit. It would be most perilous to do away with these words; for if the wrath of God be only a figure, His love must be but a figure too. Such, therefore, is the true idea of human punishment. It exists to reform the offender, to purify society, and also to express God's and man's indignation at sin.

## II. The Christian idea of absolution.

Before we go farther, it will be well to explain some terms. Forgiveness is one thing, absolution is another. Absolution is the authoritative declaration of forgiveness. For example, when Christ said to the sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," He did not at this moment forgive him: he was forgiven already, but it was then that He declared his forgiveness.

Now the case before us is a distinct, unquestionable instance of ecclesiastical absolution. You are aware that many utterly deny the possibility of such a power existing in man, beyond a mere declaration of God's promises to faith; and the assurance of forgiveness on the part of any man would be counted, by some persons, as blasphemy. At once the cry of the Pharisees would be raised—"Who can forgive sins but God only?" Now here, in the Church of Corinth is a sin: it is an offense not only against man, but also against God—not a crime merely against society, but a sin; and yet St. Paul says "*I forgive.*" This is absolution: Man's declaration of God's forgiveness—man speaking in God's stead.

1. We consider, first, the use of absolution. It was to save from remorse. Absolution is here considered as a "comfort." Let us examine this more closely. There is a difference between penitence and remorse: penitence works life, remorse works death. This latter is more destructive even than self-righteousness, for it crushes, paralyzes, and kills the soul. No one, perhaps, but a minister of Christ has seen it in all its power: but some of us can tell you how the recollection of sin committed haunts men like a fiend. And so long as society lays its ban on the offender, or so long as he feels that a secret crime, if once known, would be accursed of the world, so long hope appears to him impossible. It is in vain that you speak of God's love and mercy in Christ to such a man. He will cry, "Yes; but is He merciful to *ME*?" Therefore, over and above the general declaration of God's

mercy, there is needed, if you would comfort truly, a special, personal, human assurance to the individual.

2. This absolution was representative. It represented the forgiveness of the congregation and the forgiveness of God. St. Paul forgave the sinner "for their sakes," and "in the person," that is, in the stead "of Christ." Thus, as the punishment of man is representative of the punishment and wrath of God, so the absolution of man is representative of the forgiveness of God. For human nature is representative of divine nature. And further, the Church represents humanity, and the minister represents the Church. Therefore, he who pronounces absolution at a sick man's bedside is but merely, as St. Paul was, speaking in the person of Christ. You will object, perchance: If God has forgiven the sinner, a man's word can not add to it: if He has not forgiven him, a man's word can not alter it. Yes, that is very true; but now in reply, consider a distinct command of Christ: "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And *if* the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again." Now a man might have said, What good is there in saying "peace?" If God's peace be in that family, you can not add to it; if not, you can not alter it. But Christ says, Give your blessing: it will not create peace, but it will make it felt: "Your peace shall rest upon it." So if a Christian minister absolves, in Christ's words we may say, "If the sin be forgiven, that absolution will perhaps convey the soothing conviction to the soul; if not, your absolution will turn to you again."

In conclusion, remember the ministerial absolution is representative: St. Paul forgave in the name of the Christian congregation. Every member, therefore, of that congregation was forgiving the sinner: it was his right to do so, and it was in his name that St. Paul spoke; nay, it was *because* each member had forgiven, that St. Paul forgave.

Absolution, therefore, is not a priestly prerogative, belonging to one set of men exclusively. It belongs to man, and to the minister because he stands as the representative of purified humanity. "The Son of Man"—that is, man—"hath power on earth to forgive sins." For society has this power collectively—a most actual and fearful power. Who does not know how the unforgivingness of society in branding men and women as outcasts makes their case hopeless? Men bind *his* sins—*her* crimes—on earth: and they remain bound! Now every man has this power individually. The most remarkable instance, perhaps, in the Old Testament is that of Jacob and Esau. For years the

thought of his deceit, and the dread of his brother, had weighed on Jacob's heart; and when Esau forgave him, it was as if he "had seen the face of God." Be sure this power is yours also. When a parent forgives a child, the child feels that God is nearer to him. When a master accepts a pupil's repentance, the pupil goes forth joyful from the master's presence. When school-boys receive one who has been rejected into fellowship again, a load is taken from that boy's bosom. When we treat the guilty with tenderness, hope rises in them towards God: their hearts say, "They love us; will not God forgive and love us too?"

It is a sublime, godlike privilege which you have. Oh! do not quarrel with Romanist or Tractarian about the dogma. Go and make it real in your own lives. Represent on earth the Divine clemency: forgive in the person of Christ. Loose suffering outcasts from sin, and it will be loosed in heaven.

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### LECTURE XXXIX.

2 CORINTHIANS ii. 12-17; iii. 1-3. *August 8, 1852.*

OUR last discourse closed with the 11th verse, and was employed chiefly about St. Paul's doctrine of Christian absolution. To-day our exposition begins at the 12th verse, which verse is an example of one of those rapid transitions so common in the writings of the apostle. The first thing we have to do, then, is to trace the connection. Apparently there is none; we can not at once see what the argument has to do with St. Paul going to Troas, nor what his unrest there has to do with the voyage to Macedonia. But remember that the main subject is St. Paul's defense against the charge of caprice. He had shown why he had not gone to Corinth according to promise. It was to enable the Corinthians to do the work of excommunication themselves, lest he should take it out of their hands, and so rob them of the spiritual discipline which comes from men's own exertions. For it is by what we do, and not by what is done for us, that we become strong or good.

St. Paul gives an additional proof that it was not forgetfulness of them which had made him change his mind: this proof was his unrest at Troas. While there one subject engrossed all his thoughts, the state of Corinth; and the question—what would be the result of the letter he had sent? At Troas he expected to meet Titus, who was bear-



ing the reply : but not finding him there, he could not rest ; he could not take full comfort even from "the door which had been opened" for success. He left his work half finished, and he hastened into Macedonia to meet Titus. His argument therefore is, Did this look like forgetfulness? Did this make it probable that he "had used lightness or purposed according to the flesh?" Or did it show that he was absent unwillingly, putting force on himself, like a wise parent who refuses to see his child, though his heart is all the while bleeding at what he inflicts? This is the connection between the 12th and 13th verses.

The next thing we have to do is to explain the link of thought between the 13th and the 14th verses. Here there is another startling abruptness. The apostle on mention of Macedonia breaks off into thanksgiving: "Now thanks be unto God." Here is a notable instance of the peculiar style of St. Paul. He starts from the main subject into a digression, caused by a thought which he had not expressed, and which it was not necessary to express, since it was known to his readers. What was, then, the thought at which he broke off here into an exclamation of thanksgiving? When we have found that, the connection will be clear.

It was a thought which to the Corinthians would present itself at once. Observe, he had said that he went into Macedonia. What did he find there? He found Titus with the long-looked-for letters, containing news far better than he had hoped for; that the Corinthians had done all that he asked, had been recalled to shame for wrong and to a sense of right, that they had excommunicated the criminal, and that the criminal himself was penitent. We find this is referred to in the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses of the 7th chapter of this Epistle. As soon, therefore, as St. Paul came to the word "Macedonia," memory presented to him what had greeted him there, and in his rapid way—thoughts succeeding each other like lightning—he says, without going through the form of explaining why he says it, "Now thanks be unto God." It may be observed that it is only by this kind of study that the Bible becomes intelligible.

Now that the difficulty of the connection has been removed, we select from the verses two subjects for consideration:

I. The assertion in the close of the chapter: That the Christian is always a conqueror.

II. The nature of true Christian work—in the commencement of the third chapter.

I. The assertion. "Now thanks be unto God, who always

causeth us to triumph in Christ." There was a moment in the apostle's life when he half regretted what he had done. After the letter was sent, he felt the pain of what was irrevocable: he had no rest in his spirit: for a moment he "did repent" his truthfulness; for it was possible that his firmness might have cost him the Church of Corinth. They might have rebelled against his command: they might be too little advanced in the Christian life for such severity. But when the news came, then he learnt a lesson. He had spoken in sincerity and godly truthfulness, and sincerity is best. He felt that he had won; though a few hours before, his work seemed over in Corinth. Thence we can divine the truth that the Christian is a conqueror, even in defeat. His is always a triumphant career, sooner or later. This was not a lesson for St. Paul only, but it is one also for us. On earth we have nothing to do with success or with results, but only with being true *to* God, and *for* God; for it is sincerity, and not success, which is the sweet savor before God.

Now there are two branches in which this assertion is true: 1. The defeat of the true-hearted is victory; 2. The apparent harm done by the true-hearted is victory.

1. It was quite possible that the result might have turned out otherwise: instead of penitence, there might have been hardness; instead of strengthened, there might have been only weakened influence. Such thoughts as these must have presented themselves to the apostle: "Do not be so bold or so decided; you will very likely cripple your influence;" and these fears might have been realized; for in this world truth is not always successful. Now it seems a most important Christian lesson to insist upon the truth that defeat in doing right is nevertheless victory. Every one knows the common adage, "Honesty is the best policy:" Do right, Paul, and you will not lose influence. This is true sometimes; but St. Paul would not have been a Christian unless he had felt—I may lose *all*; and yet I will do right, and be true to conscience.

Let us get rid of that false notion, that we are sure to win if we are true to conscience! No! often—most often—you must serve God at a loss. Surely the Cross should teach us, that in this world doing right, and being true, is not "the best policy," as the world understands it. The lives of the Apostles, the lives of all God's best and noblest should teach us this lesson. When did you ever hear that conscience could be saved without a self-sacrifice? For the victory of the true lies not so much in winning the contest as in spreading

a Spirit. Even had St. Paul failed in his immediate object, the conversion of the Corinthians, think you that that true Epistle of his would have lost its power in the ages to come? Impossible! and that would have been his triumph. Beyond, beyond—oh! beyond the present, must we look for victory.

2. The apparent harm done by the true-hearted is victory. St. Paul might have done harm; he might have produced rebellion at Corinth. Still, should he not be true? With steadiness he clearly contemplated this possibility. His truth would be to some “the savor of death unto death;” for there can be no doubt that the faithful preaching of the Gospel sometimes kills. But it is no less the Gospel—no less a sweet savor to God. Just as the vigorous breezes that are fresh life to the strong, are death to the feeble lungs, so truth—strong truth—put before the haters of truth, makes them worse. For example, the sacrifice suggested to the rich young ruler was too strong for the weakness of his spirit, and the faint desire of good which was in him was slain. And yet is this Gospel which destroys a sweet and acceptable savor to God even in them that perish. An awful truth! The Gospel preached in fidelity ruins human souls. A “banquet!”—oh! know ye what ye say? It is sometimes death to hear it! And yet we must not dilute it. How the apostle rejoiced in that day that he had been uncompromising, and firm, and true! “not dealing deceitfully with the Word of God.” Even had the Corinthians perished, he must have rejoiced that their blood was not on his head.

## II. The nature of true Christian work.

The work of the Apostle Paul is contained in the 2d verse: “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.” But let us explain the meaning of this phrase and its connection. The close of the 2d chapter looked like boasting—it seemed like a recommendation of himself. Now, in these verses, he is replying to the possible charge. He declares that he wanted no commendation to them, no praise, no recommendatory letters; and in this he was alluding to the *ἐπιστολαὶ συστατικαὶ* of the early Church. A great Christian brotherhood was the Church of Christ; and if a Christian of Corinth travelled to Rome or Galatia, he received from the bishop or congregation letters of recommendation, and was at home at once among friends. Now such a letter, St. Paul says, he did not need. Nor need any boasting be his, nor praise from himself or others; his works were too well known. What, then, were St. Paul’s works? What

were St. Paul's Epistles? You will answer at once, These which we hold in our hands. "No!" replies the apostle. The Epistles of St. Paul were not those which were written then on parchment, or printed since in ink, but those which were written by God as truth on human hearts: "Ye are our Epistle."

Now first: observe the remarkable expression of the apostle: his *letter!* He was writing on men's hearts; and each man here is writing something; and his writing lasts forever. Pilate uttered a deeper truth than he thought, when he said, "What I have written, I have written." For deeds are permanent and irrevocable: that which you have written on life is forever. You can not rub, blot, or scratch it out: there it is forever; your Epistle to the world and to the everlasting ages, for all eternity palpably what you are, to be "known and read of all men." This it is which makes life so all-important. Oh! then, take care *what* you write, for you can never unwrite it again.

Secondly: the best of all Epistles is that which a man writes and engraves on human spirits, "not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." What then? A man's "works"—what are they? That which makes him "immortal," as we say. But what is that immortality? Well, the Pyramids were cut in tables of stone, and the monuments of Assyria are more enduring than brass, and yet *they* will wear out. There *are* works which will outlast even these—written not in rock, but in ink; noble works of the gifted and the pure and true. There is the Bible—and St. Paul's Epistles as part of it. But there is something which will outlast the Pyramids and the Bible: a human soul, and the work for good or evil done upon it. This is the true Christian work; it is the highest: and yet not only that which an Apostle could do, but that which all may do. And think how many *do* it! The mother, the teacher, the governess, the tutor—not ministers and Apostles only—are doing it. Men, my brothers, your truest, your best work, almost your sole work, is in that which lasts forever.

Thirdly: It is fitting to distinguish between the scribe, or amanuensis, and the real author of this spiritual Epistle, written on men's hearts. St. Paul's language might have seemed a ground of boasting: had he not written that which was to last? But he makes this distinction, that it was the Epistle of Christ, ministered by him. The Spirit of Christ—He was the author of the work, and St. Paul was but the amanuensis. Suppose, for example, that the poor scribe,

who wrote one of these Epistles at St. Paul's dictation, had prided himself upon it because it was written by his pen. Yet that were not so foolish as if some poor miserable minister or teacher, rejoicing over his success, were to misdeem the work his own.

The amanuensis?—the man? No! It is the Spirit of the living God which does the work on human hearts.

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## LECTURE XL.

2 CORINTHIANS iii. 4-18.

THE 3d chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians is one long digression, and arose out of the necessity of explaining the apparent self-sufficiency and boasting of the 17th verse of the 2d chapter; so it is not till the beginning of the 4th chapter that the subject of the 2d is taken up again.

The beginning of the 3d chapter seems but a reiteration of this boasting, for St. Paul appeals to his work in proof of his ministry. True Christian work, according to him, was something written on human souls. Men—the hearts and spirits which he had trained—these were his Epistles to the nations; so that, if the world wanted to know what St. Paul meant to say, he replied—“Look at the Corinthian Church; that is what I have to say: their lives are my writings.” The first three verses, then, are only a re-statement of his vaunt. But then he explains: The Corinthians are our Epistle, yet not ours, but rather Christ's. Christ is the Author, I am but the scribe. Not I, but the Spirit of the living God, made them what they are. I have only been the minister.

Hence he infers that there was no vanity in his assertion, though it looked like a boast. For the trust he had was not in himself—the writer—but in Christ, the Spirit, the Author of the work: “Such trust have we through Christ to Godward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God: Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.” Then it is that from these words, “able ministers,” he breaks off into a digression, which occupies all the chapter, and is descriptive of the Christian ministry in contradistinction to the Jewish.

Our subject now is the *principle* of the Christian ministry;

that is, the exposition and application of the Word of God. There are two modes in which this is done :

- I. That of the letter.
- II. That of the spirit.

Or—to use more modern equivalents—we distinguish between the formal ministry and the spiritual one: between the teaching of the Old Testament and that of the New.

Let us make, however, one preliminary remark: Ours is an exposition; and therefore we take the subject broadly. Our object is rather to get a comprehensive view of the apostle's argument, than to pursue it into every particular. Each separate sentence might be the text of a rich sermon; but omitting detail, we will confine ourselves to the main scope of the chapter; that is, to the contrast we have spoken of above:

#### I. The ministry of the letter.

The ministry of Moses was one of the letter; it was a formal ministry—a ministry of the Old Testament: for a formal ministry, a ministry of the letter, and a ministry of the Old Testament, have all the same meaning. It was the business of Moses to teach maxims, and not principles; rules for ceremonial, and not a spirit of life. And these things—rules, ceremonials, maxims, law—are what the apostle calls here the “*letter*.” Thus, for instance, truth is a principle, springing out of an inward life; but Moses only gave the rule: “Thou shalt not forswear thyself.” It is impossible not to see how plainly inadequate this rule is to all that truth requires; for he who scarcely avoided perjury may have kept, nevertheless, to the letter of the law! Again: Love is a principle; but Moses said simply, “Thou shalt not kill, nor steal, nor injure.” Again, Meekness and subduedness before God—these are of the Spirit; but Moses merely commanded fasts. And further: Unworldliness arises from a spiritual life; but Moses only said, “Be separate—circumcise yourselves;” for, under the Jewish law, it was separation from the surrounding nations which stood in the place of Christian unworldliness.

It was in consequence of the superiority of the teaching of principles over a mere teaching of maxims, that the ministry of the letter was considered as nothing; and this for two reasons: first because of its transitoriness—“it was to be done away with.”

Let us, then, look at this in a real, practical way. We say the Law was superseded by the Gospel. But why? By an arbitrary arrangement of God? No; but on an eternal prin-

ciple. And this *is* the principle: All formal truth is transient. No maxim is intended to last forever. No ceremony, however glorious, however beautiful, can be eternal. So that, though *for the time* it is a revelation, yet it can not last, because it is less than the whole truth. Thus when Christ came, instead of saying, "Thou shalt not forswear thyself," He said, "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay." So that the same truth which Moses had given in a limited form was stated by Christ in all its fullness, and the old *form* was superseded by the *principle*; and instead of saying, "Thou shalt not say, Fool, or Raca," Christ gave the principle of love; and instead of commanding the devotion of the seventh part of time to God, Christianity has declared "the sanctification of all time;" and instead of a command to sacrifice—that is, to give of your best—Christ says, "Give yourself a living sacrifice to God." In all these things observe how the form was superseded: because the higher truth had come, the letter was "done away."

The second reason for the inferiority of the letter was, that it *killed*; partly because, being rigorous in its enactments, it condemned for any non-fulfillment. In the 9th verse it is called a "ministration of condemnation." The Law had no mercy—it could have none; for its duties were done or not done; there were in it no *degrees* of goodness or evil: "He that despised Moses's law died without mercy." And partly it killed, because technicalities and multiplicities of observance necessarily deaden spiritual life. It was said by Burke that "no man comprehends less of the majesty of the English constitution than the *nisi prius* lawyer, who is always dealing with technicalities and precedents." In the same way none were so dead to the glory of the law of God as the Scribes, who were always discussing its petty minutiae. While they were disputing about the exact manner in which a sacrifice should be slain, or the precise distance of a Sabbath-day's journey, or the exact length of a phylactery, how could they comprehend the largeness of the Spirit which said, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice?"

This surely we can understand. Obedience is a large, free, glorious feeling; love is an expansion of the whole heart to God; devotion is an act of the heart, in which thought is merely silent. But could any thing dull the vigor of obedience more than frittering it away in anxieties about the mode and degree of fasting? Could aught chill love more than the question, "How often shall my brother offend and I forgive him?" Or could any thing break devotion—an exercise of mind where heart should be all in all—more into frag-

ments, than multiplied changes of posture, and turnings from side to side? Such were the deficiencies of the "letter" or the ministries of the Old Testament.

Now observe: no blame was attributable to Moses for teaching thus. St. Paul calls it "a glorious ministry;" and it was surrounded with outward demonstrations—with thunders and mighty signs—to prove it so. The reason is, that maxims, rules, and ceremonies, have truth in them: Moses was commissioned to teach truth so far as the Israelites could bear it; not in substance, but in shadows; not principles by themselves, but principles by rules, to the end of which the Church of Israel could not as yet see. In St. Paul's symbolic expression, a veil was before the lawgiver's face: it was truth he gave, but it was veiled; its lineaments were only dimly seen. These rules were to hint and lead up to a Spirit whose brightness would have only dazzled the Israelites into blindness then.

II. We have now to consider the ministry of the New Testament.

1. It was a "spiritual" ministry.

The Apostles were "ministers of the spirit," and by this St. Paul means ministers of that truth which underlies all forms, whether of word or ceremony. He does not say that it was the Holy Spirit, but "the spirit," that is, the *essence* of the Law, that the Apostles were to minister. Precisely such was Christ's own description of a wise expounder of the Word, when he compares him to a householder bringing out of his treasures "things new and old," declaring old principles under new forms. The mistake men make is this: they would have forever the same old words, the same old forms, whereas these are ever transient: intended to exist only as long as they are needful, and then to be "done away." There *are* to be new things, but there is still something in the old things which can never alter—the spirit which underlies the words, the ancient truth which creates the form it dwells in. It is in this sense that Christ is the *Spirit* of the law, for He is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." And St. Paul's ministry to the Jews, and to the Judaists among the Gentiles, was freedom from the letter—conversion to the spirit of the law. Blinded as were their minds, veiled as were their hearts, nevertheless liberty was coming. For, "when it" (the Jewish heart) "shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away: now the Lord is that Spirit." Therefore, to turn to the Lord Christ was to turn to the spirit, instead of the letter of the law; and so



they would become the true Israel, free, with clear vision: for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"—there is the "open face" which reflects the glory of Christ.

2. The ministry of the New Testament was a "life-giving" ministry.

First, let us touch on the figurative meaning of the word "life-giving." It is like a new life to know that God will not sacrifice and burnt-offering, but rather desires to find the spirit of one who says, "Lo! I come to do Thy will." It is new life to know that to love God and man is the sum of existence. It is new life—it is free thought—to know that "God be merciful to me a sinner!" is a truer prayer in God's ears than elaborate liturgies and long ceremonials of ecclesiastical ritual.

Further: Christ was the spirit of the Law, and He gave, and still gives, the gift of life. But how? St. Paul replies in the 18th verse: A living character is impressed upon us: we are as the glass or mirror which reflects back a likeness, only we reflect it livingly; it does not pass away from us as the image does from the glass, but is an imparted life, which develops itself more and more within us: for Christ is not a mere example, but the life of the world; and the Christian is not a mere copy, but a living image of the living God. He is "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now such a ministry—a ministry which endeavors to reach the life of things—the apostle calls (1.) *an able*—that is, a powerful—ministry. Observe, he names it thus, even amidst an apparent want of success. For such teaching may leave no visible fruits. It makes no party or sect. Its minister may seem to fail, but his victory is sure; he works powerfully, deeply, gloriously. He moulds souls for the ages to come. He works for the eternal world.

(2.) St. Paul calls it a bold ministry: "We use great plainness of speech." Ours should be a ministry whose words are not compacted of baldness, but boldness; whose very life is outspokenness, and free fearlessness: a ministry which has no concealment, no reserve; which scorns to take a *via media* because it is safe in the eyes of the world; which shrinks from the weakness of a mere cautiousness, but which exults even in failure, if the truth has been spoken, with a joyful confidence. For a man who sees into the heart of things speaks out not timidly, nor superstitiously, but with a brow unveiled, and with a speech as free as his spirit: "The truth has made him free."

## LECTURE XLI.

2 CORINTHIANS iv. 1-15. *November 14, 1852.*

THE first two verses of this chapter contain the principles of the Christian ministry: they embrace its motives—a sense of mercy and a sense of hope: they declare its straightforwardness, its scorn of craft and secrecy, its rejection of pious frauds and adroit casuistry; and they show that its influence is moral, and not official. Hence it becomes clear that its indirect was more sure than its direct influence.

Now the connection of these two verses with the third is through the word “every.” For a reply suggested itself to St. Paul’s mind from some objector: “Every man’s conscience has *not* acknowledged the truth of the message, nor the heavenly sincerity of the messengers.” To which the apostle answers, The exceptions do not weaken the truth of the general assertion: to every man whose heart is in a healthy state—to all but the blinded—the Gospel is God’s light; and those to whom it is not light are themselves dark, for the obscurity is in themselves, and not in the truth. And then, having replied to this objection, St. Paul proceeds with the same subject—the apostolic ministry. He represents it under two main aspects:

I. As a ministry of light.

II. As a reflection, in word and experience, of the life of Christ.

I. Let us glance at the 4th and 6th verses: “The *light* of the glorious Gospel:” “God, who commanded the *light* to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the *light* of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Compare with this what St. John says in the opening chapter of his Gospel: “The *light* shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Nothing could be more different than the minds of St. Paul and St. John; and yet how remarkably they coincide in this thought—they both call revelation “light!” According to St. John, to live in sin was to live in darkness; it was a false life—a life of lies—in which a man was untrue to his own nature. According to St. Paul, it was to live in blindness—“blinded

by the god of this world." But both apostles concur in representing revelation as simply the unveiling of the truth: the manifestation of things as they are. This is strikingly shown in St. Paul's metaphor: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

As on the darkness of the physical world light rose at the Eternal "Be," and all things appeared as they were, not a creation, but a manifestation—and yet, in truth, a real creation (as but for light, this world were as if it were not, since it is what it is in consequence of light): so, on the moral darkness of a world in sin and ignorance, the light of revealed truth showed things as they are, and exhibited them in their true relative proportions. That revelation created, indeed, a new world, which yet was not a creation of things that had not existed before: for the Gospel did not *make* God our Father; it revealed what He had ever been, is, and ever shall be; it disclosed Him, not as a tyrant, but as a Father: not as a chance, or a fate; not as a necessary *thing*, but as a person; and in the life of Christ the love of God has become intelligible to us. The Gospel threw light on God: light unknown before, even to the holiest hearts among the Jews. "Clouds and darkness are the habitation of His seat," spoke the Old Testament: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," declared the New. For out of Christ our God is only a dark, dim, and dreadful mystery. There is only an awful silence, which is never broken by an articulate voice. But all is brightness in the Redeemer's life and death.

The Gospel threw light, too, upon man's own nature. Man—a dark enigma, a contradiction to himself, with Godlike aspirations and animal cravings—asks his own heart in terror, "Am I a god or beast?" And the Gospel answers: "You are a glorious temple in ruins, to be rebuilt into a habitation of God and the Spirit, your soul to be the home of the High and Holy One, your body to be the temple of the Holy Ghost." It threw light upon the grave; for "life and immortality" were "brought to light through the Gospel." The darkness of the tomb was irradiated; and the things of that undiscovered land shone clear and tranquil then to the eye of faith: but not until *then*, for immortality before was but a mournful *perhaps*.

Now there are three practical deductions from this view of truth.

1. As to ministerial conduct. Our life is to be a *mani-*

festation of the Gospel. Observe St. Paul's argument: We do not tamper with the Word of God. It is not concealed or darkened by us; for our very work is to spread light, to throw sunshine on every side, and in every way fearlessly to declare the truth, to dread no consequences: for no real minister of Christ can be afraid of illumination.

2. Light is given to us that we may *spread* it. "We preach \* \* \* ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God \* \* \* hath shined in our hearts." If he has illuminated us, then we are your servants, to give you this illumination. We should be as "a city set on a hill;" as the salt which penetrates and purifies the earth: "Ye are the light of the world." This St. Paul felt vividly—St. Paul, who had himself been in darkness; and shall we refuse to feel it? we, who have had ages of light, which St. Paul had not? Our more open heaven seems to shut us out from feeling this. Perhaps we, who have been, or fancy ourselves to have been, in the brightness of his revelation all our lives, scarcely appreciate the necessity which he felt so strongly of communicating it.

3. It is the evil heart which hides the truth. Light shines on *all*—that is, all who are in a natural human state, all who can feel, all who have not deadened the spiritual sense. It is not the false life which can know the truth, but the true life receives what is akin to it; for "every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

Thus observe: what are "the evidences of Christianity?" "The evidences of Christianity" are—Christianity. The evidence of the sun is its light, and not the shadow on the dial. So Christ is divine to those who are of the truth. To some persons He is not the image of God. How will you prove to such that he is? Is it by arguing about miracles and prophecy? Is it by discussion about the true reading of texts, or by requiring belief on the authority of the Church? No. It is by means of a right heart: it is by means of God's Spirit ruling in the heart. These, and these alone, will disclose Christ to a man; for "no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;" and again: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," and for this reason—"they are *spiritually* discerned."

Again, it is the worldly heart which hides the truth. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." An awful thought! "The light of the glorious Gospel" is shut out by ourselves from our lives, apart from immorality, apart even from actual sin. For worldliness is distinct from sin, and the denunciation of it is peculiar to Christianity. It does not consist in distinct acts, nor in

thoughts of transgression, but it is the spirit of a whole life, which hides all that is invisible, real, and eternal, because it is devoted to the visible, the, transient, and the unreal. Christ and the world can not exist in the same heart. Men who find their all in the world—how can they, fevered by its business, excited by its pleasures, petrified by its maxims, see God in His purity, or comprehend the calm radiance of eternity?

II. The apostle represents the ministry as a reflection, in word and experience, of the life of Christ.

1. In word. Let us compare the 2d verse with the 13th. We manifest the truth, "commending ourselves to every man's conscience," because we speak in strong belief. The minister of Christ speaks in faith; that is, in a firm conviction of Divine power arising from the Resurrection—faith in the delivering or redeeming power of God. Observe the difference between this and theological knowledge. It is not a minister's wisdom, but his *conviction*, which imparts itself to others. Nothing gives life but life. Real flame alone kindles other flame: this was the power of the Apostles. "We believe, and therefore speak:" "We *can not* but speak the things which we have seen and heard:" "He that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he *knoweth* that he saith true, that ye might believe." Firm faith in what they spoke, *that* was the basis of the Apostles' strength; but in us there is one thing wanting—we only *half* believe. If we really believed the truths we deliver week after week, would not our hearts be filled with such deep earnestness, that the spectacle, of men and women listening unconcernedly to the Gospel, would sadden all our days, and impel us to preach as if we should never preach again?

In the 5th verse St. Paul says he preaches Christ, and not himself. Rescue this expression from all party interpretations, and the minister will understand that he is to preach, not the Christ of this sect or of that man, but Christ fully—Christ our hope, our pattern, our life—Christ in us, the light which is in every man subjectively; and Christ the light which, shining objectively in his life, and death, and resurrection, daily increases, as we gaze, the light of the Christ within us.

2. The ministry is a reflection of Christ's life in experience. It might be a matter of surprise that God's truth should be conveyed through such feeble instruments—men whom the axe and the lion could destroy. Well, the apostle acknowledges that it is so. He calls them "earthen vessels:"

he knows them to be but fragile receptacles of this "treasure." But this very circumstance, instead of proving that the Gospel is not of God, proves that it is. For what was the life of these men but the life of Christ over again—a life victorious in defeat? "I fill up," says St. Paul, "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ:" "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." So that in their sufferings the Apostles represented the death of Christ, and in their incredible escapes His resurrection. Figuratively speaking, their escapes were as a resurrection. Compare the word *resurrection*, used in the sense of escape, in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, at the 35th verse. One might almost say that the Apostles bore a charmed life—a mystic resemblance to their Lord: an existence which rose, like the fabled phoenix, into fresher being from its ashes.

Christ, then, is the mystic symbol of Christian life; His death and His resurrection are repeated in His people. Only with exquisite truthfulness, and in opposition to all one-sided exaggeration, St. Paul observes, that in some Christians the death was more exhibited, in others the resurrection: "So then death worketh in us, but life in you." For there are various types of the Divine life, as, for example, in Christ and in John the Baptist. It takes effect sometimes on the side of the Cross, sometimes on the side of the Resurrection. In different periods of the same life, in different ages of freedom or persecution—as we have known in the depressed Church of the Albigenses, and the victorious Church of England—in different persons during the same age, the Cross and the Resurrection alternate, and exist together. But in all there is *progress*—the decay of evil, or the birth of good; for "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

It was in this way that the early Church followed Christ's life, weekly and yearly. Friday and Sunday showed to them the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. Good-Friday and Easter-Day filled them with sorrow and with joy. For such is the true Christian aspect of life. We are not to choose the Cross exclusively. The death and the life of Christ are to be manifested in our mortal body. We are to let things *come* as God pleases, making both joy and sorrow divine, by infusing into them the Cross and the Resurrection. We are to show Christ forth in our lives till He comes. He is the sun: and Christian life is as the turning of the sunflower to the sun. This was the explanation of the mystery of St. Paul's own existence in the death and resurrection of his Lord: he was

living Christ over again. Christ was human nature personified. In His death St. Paul saw the frail humanity subject to decay; in His Resurrection the apostle saw human life elevated into Divine existence. He "was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God."

And so St. Paul felt that every true human soul must repeat Christ's existence. He could bear to look on his own decay; it was but the passing of the human: and meantime, there was ever going on within him the strengthening of the Divine. Thus his own contracted, isolated existence was gone: it had been absorbed into communion with a higher life: it had been dignified by its union with the life of lives. Just as the tidal pulsations in the estuary, a few inches only more or less, are dignified by referring them to the ocean life with which they are connected, since they repeat what the sea performed a few hours before: so St. Paul felt himself, in connection with the great sea of Humanity and with God. Pain was sacred, since Christ had also suffered. Life became grand when viewed as a repetition of the life of Christ. The apostle lived, "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in" his "mortal flesh."

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## LECTURE XLII.

2 CORINTHIANS iv. 16-18; v. 1-3. *November 21, 1852.*

IN our last lecture we viewed the Christian ministry as one of light, and as a reflection of the life of Christ in word and in experience. To-day we consider:

- I. The trials of the Christian ministry.
- II. The consolations of the Christian ministry.

I. Its trials: This is ground which has been gone over before. We will glance at one or two instances of the trials of modern missionaries: I recollect Weitbrecht who recently died at Calcutta; and well do I remember the description he gave of the difficulties encountered by the Gospel missionaries in the East. What a picture he drew of the almost unconquerable depression which was produced by the mere thought of going back to India to struggle with the darkening effects of universal idolatry—with the secret sense of incredulity in Christian truth, giving rise to the ever-recurring doubt—"Can the Gospel light be only for us few, while countless

myriads of the human race still walk in the 'shadow of death?'” Observe, too, the peculiar class of trials to be encountered in hot climates, which intensify the passions of our human nature, and render a resistance to opportunities offered for their gratification a difficult task indeed. For the martyr-spirit is not shown merely in physical suffering.

Take another instance: the dangers and escape of the missionary Krapf in East Africa. What obstacles did he not encounter in his endeavors to effect a chain of missions from west to east of that dreary continent! now attacked by robbers in the mountains of Bura; and then, many days without food, is forced at last to drink water from a musket-barrel and to eat gunpowder!

Remember, too, the graves of the Christian missionaries piled so soon and so rapidly on the pestilential plain of Sierra Leone: remember Gardiner at Tierra del Fuego; Clapper-ton dying amid the sands of Africa—the Landers—Mungo Park; and you will find that the missionaries and pioneers of Christianity still encounter the same trials, the same dangers, from famine, pestilence, and the sword, of which St. Paul so eloquently speaks in his Epistles.

## II. Christian consolations.

1. The comprehension of the law of the Cross. Spiritual life is ours through temporary death; for “though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.” Strength is ours through suffering; for “our light affliction \* \* \* worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Thus the law of our humanity is life out of decay; the type and exemplification of which is the Cross of Christ. And this is the true soother of affliction—this one steadfast thought—the glory which is being worked out thereby. For pain and death change their character according to the spirit in which they are viewed, just as the amputation of a limb is quite as painful as the shattering of it by an accident; yet in the one case the sufferer shrieks, in the other bears it heroically; because his will goes with the operation, because he feels it is right, and knows *why* it is done. Mark, however, one distinction: It is not merely the perception of the law which makes trial tolerable, but a law personified in One whom we love. The law is, “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us glory.” Stoicism taught that; but Christianity teaches it in the *person* of Christ. The Cross is an abstraction until clothed in flesh and blood. Go and talk like a philosopher to one in suffering: you get an acknowledgment of your effort, but you have not soothed the sufferer.



But go and tell him of the law *in Christ*; tell him that *He* has borne the Cross; and there is the peculiar Christian feeling of comfort, with all its tenderness, humanity, and *personality*. The law of the Cross is the truth, the rock truth, but only in a person. And hence comes the hymned feeling—how much more living than a philosophy!

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in *Thee*.”

So it is that in the mere word *cross* there is that sentiment which no other word in the English language can supply. Law of self-sacrifice? No: that is cold, not dear to us, personal, living, like the Cross.

Oh, we live—not under laws, nor philosophical abstractions, but under a spirit: and the true expression of Christianity is “*Christ* in you, the hope of glory.” Let us exemplify this from the experience of missionaries. How beautiful and touching is the remarkable gratitude of Gardiner for a few drops of water trickling down a parched boat’s side! Listen, too, to what Krapf says: “In the sanctuary of reason I find nothing but discouragement and contradiction; but in the sanctuary of God a voice comes to me and tells me—‘Fear not; death leads to life, destruction to resurrection, the demolition of all human undertakings to the erection of the kingdom of Christ.’” Observe how this is the very principle expounded last Sunday. The death and resurrection—the law of Christian life—was his strength, as of old it was St. Paul’s.

## 2. The contemplation of things not seen.

Two characteristics are mentioned as belonging to these things. They are, “not seen,” and “eternal.” Now what are these things? Not merely things unseen, because they are hidden by distance, so that we shall see them hereafter, and only not now; but they are things which are not seen, because they *never* can be seen. They are not things which are superior to those which are seen; because, though of the same nature, the latter perish, while the former last forever. They are not houses which do not decay, nor clothes which do not wear out; but they are things which are eternal, because they are not material. This is the essence of the distinction and contrast. The right, the true, the just—these are not seen, and never will be; they are eternal, but they exist now as they will be forever. The kingdom of God is not fixed in one place, nor known to the eye of sense; it can not come “by observation:” neither can ye say, “Lo! here,” or “Lo! there,” for there is no *locality* now, nor will there

be forever for the things which are eternal, immortal, invisible. These are the things of which St. Paul says: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." It is the outward and material things that perish: it is the inward that are renewed. Pain is for time: guilt is for ever. Physical punishment is for time; but horror can never die! Distinguish well what the heavenly is: because it is not the mere element of time that makes things base or noble. A thrill of nerve, even if it were to last forever, would not be heavenly. A home of physical comfort, even if it were to endure like the Pyramids, would be no sublimer than one of straw and rafters. But the everlasting heaven of God's saints is around us now. The invisible world contemplated by the martyrs is what it was, and ever will be—visible only to faith.

### 3. The thought of a life beyond the grave.

Take this in connection with the 16th verse of the 4th chapter, with this thought in our hearts: "For which cause we faint not; though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Some men there are to whom this hope is impossible. There are some who live a merely human life: and life, merely as such, since it does not necessarily imply immortality, produces no inward certainty of an existence beyond the grave. There are those who lead the life of the ephemeron, in whom there is nothing immortal, spending their days like the beasts that perish—nay, less fitted for eternity than they. No deep thoughts, no acts fought out on deep abiding principles, have been theirs. They live mere accidental beings, light mortals who dance their giddy round above the abysses, looking at the things seen, with transient tears for sorrow and transient smiles for joy. This life is their all; and at last they have fluttered out their time, and go forth into endless night. Why not? what is there in them that is not even now perishing?

But St. Paul, beset by persecution, the martyr of the Cross, daily flying for his life, in perils by land and sea, drew immortal comforts out of all his trials. Every sorrow gave him a keener sight of the things invisible. Every peril, every decay of the outward, strengthened in him that inward man "risen with Christ," which is the earnest of our immortal life. With this hope he was comforted, and with this eternal existence growing within him, he was buoyed up above the thought of weakness or of dismay. A time would come

when all should be changed: this earthly house should be dissolved; but he fainted not: for he says, "We know that \* \* \* we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The hope of immortal life was his, and with that he was consoled.

That hope was not a selfish one. There are some who say that to live a high life here, in the hope of immortality hereafter, is an unworthy object; that it is more noble to do good, and to act well, and be content to perish. Strange perversion! Is the desire of food, for the *sake* of food, selfish? Is the desire of knowledge, for the *sake* of knowledge, selfish? No! they are appetites each with its appointed end: one a necessary appetite of the body, the other a noble appetite of the mind. Then, is the desire of immortal life, for the sake of "more life and fuller," selfish? No! rather it is the noblest, purest, truest appetite of the soul. It is not happiness nor reward we seek; but we seek for the perfection of the imperfect—for the deep, abounding life of those who shall see God as He is, and shall feel the strong pulsations of that existence which is love, purity, truth, goodness: to whom shall be revealed all the invisible things of the Spirit in perfection!

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### LECTURE XLIII.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 4-11. *November 28, 1852.*

IN the preceding verses St. Paul has spoken of two great consolations in ministerial trial—the thought of things invisible, and the expectation of a blessed resurrection. In considering them, I tried to explain what things invisible are; and I said they were not things unseen because separated by distance, or by reason of the imperfection of our faculties, or of any interposed veil; but they were unseen because in their nature they were incapable of being seen—such as honor, truth, and love. I tried to show how the expectation of immortality is not a selfish hope, because it is not the desire of enjoyments such as we have here, but the desire of a higher inward life—"An house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

But here evidently a mistake might arise. Speaking thus of a spiritual heaven, it is quite possible that men might conceive of it as a disembodied state, and suppose the apostle to represent life in a visible form as degradation. There were

such persons in the old time, who thought they could not cultivate their spirit-nature without lowering that of their body. They fasted and wore sackcloth, they lay in ashes, and eschewed cleanliness as too great a luxury. Nay, they even refused to hear of a resurrection which would restore the body to the spirit: redemption being, according to them, release from the prison of the flesh.

In opposition to such views the apostle here says, correctively: "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." That is, it is not that we are to get rid of something, but to gain something. Not the lowering of the body, but the strengthening of the spirit—that is spirituality. For there are two extremes into which men are apt to run: they either serve the body as a master, or crush it as an enemy. Whereas St. Paul taught that the true way of mortifying the flesh is to strengthen the spirit. The mortal will disappear in the elevation of the immortal.

Here, then, we have—first, a test of spirituality. Let us observe the description given: "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." If we stop here, myriads deserve the name of spiritual men; for who has not groaned, being burdened, in this tabernacle? Disappointment may sicken a man of living, or the power of enjoyment may fail, or satiety may arrive to the jaded senses and feelings: or, in pain and poverty, a man may long for the grave; or, old age may come, when "the grasshopper is a burden." For example, Job uttered maledictions on the day when he was born: "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul: which long for death, but it cometh not: and dig for it more than for hid treasures; which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?" If, then, the mere desire to be unclothed were spirituality, that passionate imprecation of Job's was spiritual. But St. Paul's feeling was: "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." With him a desire to depart and to be with Christ implied a yearning for a higher spiritual life, and a deeper longing for more resemblance to the mind of Christ.

Secondly, the principle of Christian assurance.

First of all there is such a thing as Christian assurance: "Therefore we are always confident:" and again, "I know whom I have believed:" and again, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in

the heavens." Such was St. Paul's assurance. We may not feel it; but, my brethren, we must not lower the standard of Christian attainment to suit our narrow lives. To many of us heaven is an awful peradventure. It is so to most men who are living in comfort, and are not suffering for Christ. But to St. Paul, ever on the brink of that world to come, his own immortality of blessedness was no peradventure. It was not a matter of doubt with him whether he was Christ's or not. Let us, then, see the grounds of this assurance.

1. God's purpose: "He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God." 2. God's Spirit in the soul—"an earnest."

1. God's purpose. St. Paul would not believe that God was merely weighing His frail creatures in the balance. No: they were purposed by Him for heaven; God meant their blessedness: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation." He had redeemed them by the blood of an everlasting covenant: "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Our salvation does not hang on our own desires: it is in the hands of One who loves us better than we love ourselves.

2. God's Spirit in the soul—"an earnest."

Here, in another form, is the repetition of St. Paul's view, that the literal resurrection is naturally, in the order of grace, but a development of the spiritual resurrection. To repeat the simile I have previously used: As the vital force appears in things so different as leaf, flower, and fruit, so the Divine life manifests itself first in the spiritual, and then in the literal resurrection. And just as when the flower appears, you infer the future fruit, excluding the possibility of a blight, so when spiritual goodness appears you infer future glory. This is Christian assurance. Therefore, if God's Spirit be in you, be confident, yet humble; rejoice with trembling, but still with unshaken trust in coming blessedness.

Hence Christian life becomes now a life of faith: "We walk by faith, not by sight." There is a life called in Scripture "a life hid with Christ in God." Now it is very easy to speak glibly and fluently of that life as a common thing. I can not bring my lips to use such language. It is a rare and wondrous life; and so in speaking of it, I prefer to contemplate the life of St. Paul, instead of assuming the existence of ordinary men to be such as is here described. A life like his—was it not indeed hidden with his Master in the heavens? He was ever on the brink of the grave. To him the world was crucified. He had unlearned the love of this life

by an intense desire of another. The Cross of Christ was all that to him seemed beautiful; so that this present existence became a kind of banishment (ver. 6)—a place of sojourn, and not a home. He moved on, free from incumbrances, ever “ready to depart, and to be with Christ.”

The thought of such a life has in it something very awful and sublime. It is almost fearful to think of a human being really living as St. Paul did, breathing the atmosphere of heaven while yet on earth. But I remark it now for this purpose: to remind you that the words of St. Paul can not be, except with shocking unreality, adopted by persons who are living less spiritually than he did. There is a common but, I think, most dangerous habit of using Scripture language familiarly, calling one’s self “the chief of sinners,” talking of “spiritual joys and experiences,” and of “communion with God:” of “living by faith,” and of this “pilgrim life.” On *many* lips these are weak and false expressions. It is like using Goliath’s armor, and thinking that thereby we get a giant’s strength; while so long as we are not strong, such armor would only weaken us. And so, the fact of our using Scripture language does not make us more spiritual: nay, it makes us less so, if it hides from us our weakness—if, while using the language of a spiritual giant, we forget that we are dwarfs. No, my brethren—a life of faith is a grand, solitary, awful thing. *Who* among us is living it?

Hence, too, Christian life is a toil (ver. 9): “We labor.” In the original it is a strong word—“are zealous, put forth all our efforts.” For St. Paul worked, knowing the night was coming. He strove—“ever as in his great Taskmaster’s eye.” And the motives for this toil were two:

1. To please God; 2. To be prepared for judgment.
1. To no man did life present itself so strongly in the light of a scene for work as it did to St. Paul. That spirit which characterized his Master was remarkable in him. What was the Spirit of Christ? “I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day:” “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” “My meat is to do the will of my Father which sent me, and to finish His work.” And this He did completely; at the close he says, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.” This spirit was also in St. Paul. But now observe, this work was with him not a dire necessity, but a blessed privilege; for he says: “And I will very gladly spend and be spent.” It was not the service of the slave; it was the joyous service of the freeman: “We are confident: *wherefore* we labor, that whether present or absent,

we may be accepted of Him." He was not working to win life, but because he had life; he was laboring in love, to please God.

2. The second motive was the feeling of accountability (ver. 10): "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." Now this feeling of accountability may assume either of two forms. In a free and generous spirit, it may be simply a sense of duty; in a slavish and cowardly spirit, it will be a sense of compulsion; and the moment the sense of duty ends the sense of compulsion begins. So St. Paul says: "If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me." That is, "If I cheerfully do it, the doing is itself reward; but if not, then it lies on me like an obligation." This is the difference between the two feelings: *I ought*, or *I must*; the Gospel, or the Law. These feelings are repeated in every man; for the Gospel and the Law are not two periods of history only, but they are two periods in universal human experience. Where the spirit of the Gospel is not, there the spirit of the Law is. Hence the apostle says: "Knowing, therefore, the *terror* of the Lord, we persuade men."

Consider, then, the terrors of the judgment. Remember, St. Paul does not say merely that he shall receive according to what he hath done in the body, but that he shall receive the things done—the very self-same things he did—they are to be his punishment. To illustrate the apostle's meaning by analogy, future retribution is the same as here on earth. God's punishments are not arbitrary, but natural. For example, a man commits a murder. It would be an arbitrary punishment if lightning struck him, or an earthquake swallowed him up. The inhabitants of Melita, seeing the viper fasten on Paul's hand, inferred that he was a murderer. But God's punishment for hatred and murder is hardening of the heart. He that shuts love out, shuts out God.

So, again, if a man seduces another weaker than himself into crime, the earth will not open as it did for Dathan and Abiram. But God has hidden in the man's own heart the avenging law: he becomes a degraded man: the serpent tempter's curse is his—"To go on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life." Or, again, some one is plunged in passionateness, sloth, sensual life. God will not create a material flame to burn the man; the flame is spiritual, is inward—a reptile to creep and crawl, and leave its venom on his heart. He receives the things done in the body. Now such as that is the law of future retribution: "Whatsoever

a man soweth"—not something else, but "*that* shall he also reap." "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still." Such are some of the Scripture metaphors to show the personality of future punishment.

"Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord," says St. Paul, "we persuade men." Striking words! Not "we terrify," not "we threaten," but "we persuade." Here was the difference between rhetorical thunders and the teaching of one who *knew* and believed the terrors of which he spoke. Oh! contrast with this the tone in which God's ministers too often threaten sinners. They paint the torments of the lost minutely and hideously, and can yet go home to the evening meal with zest unimpaired. Think you, if such a man *believed* what he said—that the mass of his brethren were going to hell—he could sleep after his own denunciation. No! when a man *knows* the terrors of the Lord, he "persuades men." Hence came the tears of Jeremiah; hence flowed the tears of Him who knew the doom of Jerusalem. Therefore, if in our tone there be any thing objurgatory, denunciatory, threatening, may God give us the spirit to *persuade*! May He teach us to believe the terrors of which we speak!

Brethren, there is no *perhaps*. These are things which will be hereafter. You can not alter the eternal laws. You can not put your hand in the flame and not be burnt. You can not sin in the body and escape the sin; for it goes inward, becomes part of you, and is itself the penalty which cleaves forever and ever to your spirit. Sow in the flesh, and you will reap corruption. Yield to passion, and it becomes your tyrant and your torment. Be sensual, self-indulgent, indolent, worldly, hard—oh! they all have their corresponding penalties: "Whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap."

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#### LECTURE XLIV.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 12-17. December 5, 1852.

IN the preceding chapters and verses St. Paul has been magnifying his ministry. It had been, he says, a ministry of the Spirit, not of the letter (iii. 6). It had been straightforward and veracious: its authority had been that of the truth—"Commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (iv. 2). It had been a suffering and a martyr ministry (iv. 8, 9, 10); representative, too, of Christ



in word and deed (iv. 5 and 10); unworldly (v. 2, 8, 9); and persuasive (ver. 11).

In all this the apostle glorifies his own ministry and his way of performing it. It is a glorious description, truly. But when a man speaks thus of himself, we are apt to call it boasting. So, no doubt, many of the Corinthians would call it; and hence St. Paul several times anticipates such a charge: for instance, in the first verse of the 3d chapter, and also in the 12th verse of the 5th chapter. For some of the Corinthian Church might have reasoned in this manner: "You say you commend yourself to our consciences, and that we recognize the truth of what you say from an inward plainness. Now if all this is so plain, why commend yourself? why so anxious to set yourself right?" But the reply is: "I do not commend myself for my own sake. It is not a personal boast. It is the only possible reply to those who require a ministry with splendid external credentials, instead of the inward witness of the heart" (ver. 12).

I. The apostle's defense of his self-approval.

II. The general principles of life with which this self-approval was connected.

I. The apostle's defense was founded on two reasons. First: We "give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart." Secondly: "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause."

1. The false teachers gloried "in appearance," in outward demonstration, in dazzling credentials, such as eloquence; or they boasted of belonging to St. Peter, or prided themselves in a superabundance of spiritual gifts. On the contrary, St. Paul says that the true apostolic credentials are those of the heart; and accordingly, the proofs he had given were—his truth, his sufferings, his persuasiveness, his simplicity, his boldness, and his life as being an image of Christ's. This corresponds with what I have before said, namely, that the Christian ministry is a succession of the prophetic, not the priestly office. There were two sorts of teachers, priests and prophets. The priest said: "Here are my credentials. I am ordained God's messenger: therefore, what I say is to be received." The prophet said: "What I say is truth; therefore, I am to be received as from God." The priest proved, first, that he was a messenger, and thence inferred his inspiration; but the prophet declared his message, and from it inferred that he was truly sent. This is

clear from the nature of the thing. Every one knew who was the priest. But the prophet rose from amongst the people, proclaiming himself to be from God. "Where is your proof?" was the cry of all; and the answer came—"Here, in what I say." Consequently, the priest was always heard; the prophet's words were rarely believed till he was slain: and this because men glory in appearances, not in heart. Now St. Paul's credentials were those of the heart—"By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience." It was not, "First, we prove ourselves, and then our mission;" but, "First, we declare our message, and from it we deduce our apostleship." This is the Christian ministry.

2. "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God." Now "Whether we be beside ourselves" means, "Whether we boast of ourselves." The vehemence of self-defense might be called so in temporary excitement. The apostle's defense might seem like that of one deranged: as once before it appeared to the heathen procurator: "Paul, thou art beside thyself." "Well," said St. Paul, "we adopt the words 'beside ourselves.' Be it so! it is for God's cause. We boast of our qualifications for the sake of God, to Whom they all belong." Or, again, "Whether we be sober"—that is, restrain ourselves—our moderation is an example of humility to you.

There are, then, cases in which it is wise for a Christian to vindicate himself against false charges; there are others in which it is wiser to restrain himself, and to remain silent. The apostle's defense, vehement even so far as to provoke the charge of being "beside himself," teaches us that it is sometimes false humility, and false moderation, to lie under an undenied slur on our character or our words. To give another example: Samuel vindicated himself: "Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it to you." For there are charges which must be met by legal purgation, or by avowal, or by denial; and then we must not hide nor deny the gifts with which God has endued us. In such a case, to do so is not a vain declaration of our excellence, but a graceful acknowledgment of God's mercy; as, for example, Milton's noble boast in the twenty-second sonnet.

On the other hand, some charges are of a nature so delicate, complicated, and shadowy, that public defense leaves the matter worse than before. It is better, then, to let time

and character defend you. For there are cases in which dignified silence is the Christian's only defense. So it was in our Saviour's life. Men misinterpreted His words, and blackened His reputation. How was He to answer? Was He to go into the petty charges one by one? or was he to leave time and God to defend His cause? He was "sober for" our "cause."

II. The general principles of life with which the apostle's self-approval was connected.

It is the peculiarity of St. Paul's mind that he never can speak of an act as an isolated thing. You always find it referred at once to some great law, or running up into some great principle. If he sees a detached law, commanding that the ox shall not be stinted of his provender, he grasps at once the principle that "the laborer is worthy of his hire." If he forbids lying, it is because "we are members one of another." Here, too, observe how high and divine motives enter into the smallest act. Even the apostle's self-defense was in the genuine spirit of Christianity: "The love of Christ constraineth us." All was subordinate to that. Whether we are vehement, or whether we are silent, it is because His love constrains us. Remark, then, one thing in passing—it is St. Paul's Christianity: a pervading spirit growing into a habit, and governing his very words!

Three subjects, then, we have for consideration:

1. The main principle of Christian life—Love; 2. The law of redeemed humanity; 3. The new aspect of humanity in Christ.

1. Love, the main principle of Christian life. Herein consists Christian liberty: a Christian is freed from the Law, and yet he does what the Law requires, and more, because his obedience is not that of "the letter, but the spirit;" as St. Paul says, the Christian is *constrained* by love to act. And why? Because God has taught him that it is beautiful and right to do so, and because God has made the Love of Christ paramount in his heart to all other love. Let us make, therefore, a distinction. When we say that a Christian is free from the Law, we do not mean that he may break it, or not, as he likes. We mean that he is bound to do right by a nobler tie than "*you must.*"

Consider the Law as expressed in the first, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments, and then examine the relations in which a Christian is placed with regard to these commandments. Hence the apostle says: "To them that are without law" I became "as without law;" but he ex-

plains—"being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ." And again: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

Christian liberty, then, is a loving servitude to God. Just as if a slave were made free, and then felt himself bound in gratitude to toil with tenfold vigor for a master whom he loved instead of fearing; or just as the mother is the slave to her sick child, and would do almost impossibilities, not because it is her duty, but because she loves her child—so the whole moral law is abrogated to us as a law, because obedience to it is insured in the spirit.

2. The law of redeemed humanity: "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."

"All are dead:" that I call the law of redeemed humanity. Let us explain this expression. It is sometimes interpreted, "If one died for all, then all must have been spiritually dead."

But this is not St. Paul's meaning. Those who have intelligently followed his argument thus far will see at once that it is beside his reasoning. There are two kinds of death—one *in* sin, before redemption; the other *to* sin, which *is* redemption. Here it is of the death *to* sin, and not the death *in* sin, that St. Paul speaks. This is his argument: If one died as the representative of all, then in that death all died; not that they were dead before, but dead *then*. You will recollect that this is the great thought throughout this Epistle. Every Christian is dead in Christ's death, and risen in Christ's resurrection: "In that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Again: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." So here there is exactly the same train of thought: "He died for all, that they which live should not thenceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (ver. 15). This is Christ's redemption: He died to sin *for* all, as the representative of all. In his death we all have died. He rose again, and life is now owed to Him. In Christ alone, then, is the true law of our humanity intelligible.

3. The new aspect of humanity in Christ: "a new creature," or creation.

Humanity as a whole, and individually, is spiritualized; it is viewed in Christ as a thing dead and alive again—dead to evil, but risen to righteousness. For even such is Christ, the Son of Man (ver. 16): "Yea, though we have known Christ

after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." Even Christ we know now as the Son of God, rather than as the Son of Man. So by us Christ is to be known spiritually, and not with worldly ideas, such as the Apostles had of Him when He lived. He is to be recognized no more as weak, rejected, despised, battling with evil, but as the conqueror of evil; for the Resurrection has shown what He was: He was "declared to be the Son of God, with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Remember, however, the historical order: Christ was revealed first as man, *then* as God; so now, it is best to begin with the simplest aspect of Him. Teach children first the simple beauty of Christ's manhood—only we must not rest there: Now, therefore, it is not Christ who was, but Christ who is; "it is Christ who died, yea, rather who is risen again: who also liveth to make intercession for us." It is the same in each individual Christian. A Christian is human nature revolutionized (ver. 17). Almost the deepest thing in the Jewish mind was that exclusiveness which made the Jew at last believe that holiness consisted in national separation. In the Jew, then, Christianity caused the abjuration of prejudice. The Gentile it freed from atheism and idolatry. In both the Jew and Gentile it changed the life of flesh and self into a spiritual and self-sacrificing existence.

My brethren, there must be a crisis in your being. It may be gradual in its progress, like John the Baptist's, or sudden, like St. Paul's; but except it take place, "except a man be born again, he can not see the Kingdom of God."

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#### LECTURE XLV.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 14, 15.

It may be that in reading these verses some of us have understood them in a sense foreign to that of the apostle. It may have seemed that the argument ran thus: Because Christ died upon the cross for *all*, therefore all must have been in a state of spiritual death before; and if we were asked what doctrines are to be elicited from this passage, we should reply, "The doctrine of universal depravity, and the constraining power of the gratitude due to Him who died to redeem us from it." There is, however, in the first place, this fatal objection to such an interpretation, that the death here spoken of is used in two diametrically opposite senses.

In reference to Christ, death literal; in reference to all, death spiritual. Now, in the thought of St. Paul, the death of Christ was always viewed as liberation from the power of evil: "In that he died, he died unto sin once;" and again, "He that is dead is freed from sin." The literal death, then, in one clause, means *freedom* from sin; the spiritual death of the next is *slavery* to it. Wherein, then, lies the cogency of the apostle's reasoning? How does it follow that because Christ died to evil, all before that must have died to God? Of course that doctrine is true in itself, but it is *not* the doctrine of the text.

In the next place, the ambiguity belongs only to the English word—it is impossible to make the mistake in the original: the word which stands for *were* is a word which does not imply a continued state, but must imply a single finished act. It can not by any possibility imply that before the death of Christ men *were* in a state of death—it can only mean they became dead at the moment when Christ died. If you read it thus, the meaning of the English will emerge—"if one died for all, then all died;" and the apostle's argument runs thus, that if one acts as the representative of all, then his act is the act of all. If the ambassador of a nation makes reparation in a nation's name, or does homage for a nation, that reparation, or that homage, is the nation's act—if *one* did it *for* all, then *all* did it. So that instead of inferring that because Christ died for all, therefore before that all were dead to God, his natural inference is that therefore all are now dead to sin. Once more, the conclusion of the apostle is exactly the reverse of that which this interpretation attributes to him: he does not say that Christ died in order that men might *not* die, but exactly for this very purpose, that they *might*; and this death he represents in the next verse by an equivalent expression—the life of unselfishness: "That they which live might henceforth live not unto themselves." The "dead" of the first verse are "they that live" of the second.

The form of thought finds its exact parallel in Romans, vi. 10, 11. Two points claim our attention:

- I. The vicarious sacrifice of Christ.
- II. The influence of that sacrifice on man.

I. The vicariousness of the sacrifice is implied in the word "for." A vicarious act is an act done for another. When the Pope calls himself the vicar of Christ, he implies that he acts for Christ. The vicar or viceroy of a kingdom is one who acts for the king—a vicar's act, therefore, is virtually the

act of the principal whom he represents: so that if the papal doctrine were true, when the vicar of Christ *pardons*, Christ has pardoned. When the viceroy of a kingdom has published a proclamation or signed a treaty, the sovereign himself is bound by those acts.

The truth of the expression *for all* is contained in this fact, that Christ is the representative of humanity—properly speaking, the reality of human nature. This is the truth contained in the emphatic expression “Son of Man.” What Christ did *for* humanity was done by humanity, because in the name of humanity. For a truly vicarious act does not supersede the principal’s duty of performance, but rather implies and acknowledges it. Take the case from which this very word of vicar has received its origin. In the old monastic times, when the revenues of a cathedral or a cure fell to the lot of a monastery, it became the duty of that monastery to perform the religious services of the cure. But inasmuch as the monastery was a corporate body, they appointed one of their number, whom they denominated their vicar, to discharge those offices for them. His service did not supersede theirs, but was a perpetual and standing acknowledgment that they, as a whole and individually, were under the obligation to perform it. The act of Christ is the act of humanity—that which all humanity is bound to do. His righteousness does not supersede our righteousness, nor does His sacrifice supersede our sacrifice. It is the representation of human life and human sacrifice—vicarious for all, yet binding upon all.

That Christ died for all is true:

1. Because He was the victim of the sin of all. In the peculiar phraseology of St. Paul, He died unto sin. He was the victim of sin—He died by sin. It is the appalling mystery of our redemption that the Redeemer took the attitude of subjection to evil. There was scarcely a form of evil with which Christ did not come in contact, and by which He did not suffer. He was the victim of false friendship and ingratitude, the victim of bad government and injustice. He fell a sacrifice to the vices of all classes—to the selfishness of the rich, and the fickleness of the poor: intolerance, formalism, skepticism, hatred of goodness, were the foes which crushed Him.

In the proper sense of the word, He was a victim. He did not adroitly wind through the dangerous forms of evil, meeting it with expedient silence. Face to face, and front to front, He met it, rebuked it, and defied it; and just as truly as he is a voluntary victim whose body, opposing the

progress of the car of Juggernaut, is crushed beneath its monstrous wheels, was Christ a victim to the world's sin: because pure, He was crushed by impurity; because just and real and true, He waked up the rage of injustice, hypocrisy, and falsehood.

Now this sin was the sin of all. Here arises at once a difficulty: it seems to be most unnatural to assert that in any one sense He was the sacrifice of the sin of all. We did not betray him—that was Judas's act—Peter denied him—Thomas doubted—Pilate pronounced sentence—it must be a figment to say that these were our acts; we did not watch Him like the Pharisees, nor circumvent Him like the Scribes and lawyers; by what possible sophistry can we be involved in the complicity of that guilt? The savage of New Zealand who never heard of Him, the learned Egyptian and the voluptuous Assyrian who died before He came; how was it the sin of all?

The reply that is often given to this query is wonderfully unreal. It is assumed that Christ was conscious, by His omniscience, of the sins of all mankind; that the duplicity of the child, and the crime of the assassin, and every unholy thought that has ever passed through a human bosom, were present to His mind in that awful hour as if they were His own. This is utterly unscriptural. Where is the single text from which it can be, except by force, extracted? Besides this, it is fanciful and sentimental; and again, it is dangerous, for it represents the whole Atonement as a fictitious and shadowy transaction. There is a mental state in which men have felt the burden of sins which they did not commit. There have been cases in which men have been mysteriously excruciated with the thought of having committed the unpardonable sin. But to represent the mental phenomena of the Redeemer's mind as in any way resembling this—to say that His conscience was oppressed with the responsibility of sins which He had not committed—is to confound a state of sanity with the delusions of a half-lucid mind, and the workings of a healthy conscience with those of one unnatural and morbid.

There is a way, however, much more appalling and much more real, in which this may be true, without resorting to any such fanciful hypothesis. Sin has a great power in this world: it gives laws like those of a sovereign, which bind us all, and to which we are all submissive. There are current maxims in Church and State, in society, in trade, in law, to which we yield obedience. For this obedience every one is responsible; for instance, in trade, and in the profession of



law, every one is the servant of practices the rectitude of which his heart can only half approve—every one complains of them, yet all are involved in them. Now, when such sins reach their climax, as in the case of national bankruptcy or an unjust acquittal, there may be some who are, in a special sense, the actors in the guilt; but evidently, for the bankruptcy, each member of the community is responsible in that degree and so far as he himself acquiesced in the duplicities of public dealing; every careless juror, every unrighteous judge, every false witness, has done his part in the reduction of society to that state in which the monster injustice has been perpetrated. In the riot of a tumultuous assembly by night, a house may be burnt, or a murder committed; in the eye of the law, all who are aiding and abetting there are each in his degree responsible for that crime; there may be difference in guilt, from the degree in which he is guilty who with his own hand perpetrated the deed, to that of him who merely joined the rabble from mischievous curiosity—degrees from that of willful murder to that of more or less excusable homicide.

The Pharisees were declared by the Saviour to be guilty of the blood of Zacharias, the blood of righteous Abel, and of all the saints and prophets who fell before he came. But how were the Pharisees guilty? They built the sepulchres of the prophets, they honored and admired them: but they were guilty, in that they were the children of those that slew the prophets: children in this sense, that they inherited their *spirit*, they opposed the good in the form in which it showed itself in *their day* just as their fathers opposed the form displayed to theirs; therefore, He said that they belonged to the same confederacy of evil, and that the guilt of the blood of all who had been slain should rest on that generation. Similarly we are guilty of the death of Christ. If you have been a false friend, a skeptic, a cowardly disciple, a formalist, selfish, an opposer of goodness, an oppressor, whatever evil you have done, in that degree and so far you participate in the evil to which the Just One fell a victim—you are one of that mighty rabble which cried, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" for your sin He died; His blood lies at your threshold.

Again, He died for all, in that His sacrifice represents the sacrifice of all. We have heard of the doctrine of "imputed righteousness;" if is a theological expression to which meanings foolish enough are sometimes attributed, but it contains a very deep truth, which it shall be our endeavor to elicit.

Christ is the realized idea of our humanity. He is God's

idea of man completed. There is every difference between the ideal and the actual—between what a man aims to be and what he is; a difference between the race as it is, and the race as it existed in God's creative idea when He pronounced it very good.

In Christ, therefore, God beholds humanity; in Christ He sees perfected every one in whom Christ's spirit exists in germ. He to whom the possible is actual, to whom what will be already *is*, sees all things *present*, gazes on the imperfect, and sees it in its perfection. Let me venture an illustration. He who has never seen the vegetable world except in Arctic regions has but a poor idea of the majesty of vegetable life—a microscopic red moss tinting the surface of the snow, a few stunted pines, and here and there perhaps a dwindled oak; but to the botanist who has seen the luxuriance of vegetation in its tropical magnificence, all that wretched scene presents another aspect; to him those dwarfs are the representatives of what might be, nay, what has been in a kindlier soil and a more genial climate; he fills up by his conception the miserable actuality presented by these shrubs, and attributes to them—imputes, that is, to them—the majesty of which the undeveloped germ exists already. Now the difference between those trees seen in themselves, and seen in the conception of their nature's perfectness which has been previously realized, is the difference between man seen in himself and seen in Christ. We are feeble, dwarfish, stunted specimens of humanity. Our best resolves are but withered branches, our holiest deeds unripe and blighted fruit; but to the Infinite Eye, who sees in the perfect One the type and assurance of that which shall be, this dwindled humanity of ours is divine and glorious. Such are we in the sight of God the Father as is the very Son of God Himself.

This is what theologians, at least the wisest of them, meant by "imputed righteousness." I do not mean that all who have written or spoken on the subject had this conception of it, but I believe they who thought truly meant this; they did not suppose that in imputing righteousness there was a kind of figment, a self-deception in the mind of God; they did not mean that by an act of will He chose to consider that every act which Christ did was done by us; that He imputed or reckoned to us the baptism in Jordan, and the victory in the wilderness, and the agony in the garden, or that He believed, or acted as if He believed, that when Christ died each one of us died; but He saw humanity submitted to the law of self-sacrifice: in the light of that idea He beholds us as perfect,

and is satisfied. In this sense the apostle speaks of those that are imperfect, yet "by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." It is true, again, that He died for us, in that we present His sacrifice as ours. The value of the death of Christ consisted in the surrender of self-will. In the 40th Psalm, the value of every other kind of sacrifice being first denied, the words follow, "Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." The profound idea contained, therefore, in the death of Christ is the duty of self-surrender.

But in *us* that surrender scarcely deserves the name; even to use the word self-sacrifice covers us with a kind of shame. Then it is that there is an almost boundless joy in acquiescing in the life and death of Christ, recognizing it as ours, and representing it to ourselves and God as what we aim at. If we can not understand how in this sense it can be a sacrifice for us, we may partly realize it by remembering the joy of feeling how art and nature realize for us what we can not realize for ourselves. It is recorded of one of the world's gifted painters that he stood before the masterpiece of the great genius of his age—one which he could never hope to equal, nor even rival—and yet the infinite superiority, so far from crushing him, only elevated his feeling, for he saw realized those conceptions which had floated before him, dim and unsubstantial; in every line and touch he felt a spirit immeasurably superior, yet kindred, and is reported to have exclaimed, with dignified humility, "And I too am a painter!"

Or, again, we must all have felt, when certain effects in nature, combinations of form and color, have been presented to us, our own idea speaking in intelligible and yet celestial language; when, for instance, the long bars of purple, "edged with intolerable radiance," seemed to float in a sea of pale pure green, when the whole sky seemed to reel with thunder, when the night-wind moaned. It is wonderful how the most commonplace men and women, beings who, as you would have thought, had no conception that rose beyond a commercial speculation or a fashionable entertainment, are elevated by such scenes; how the slumbering grandeur of their nature wakes and acknowledges kindred with the sky and storm. "I can not speak," they would say, "the feelings which are in me; I have had emotions, aspirations, thoughts; I can not put them into words. Look there! listen now to the storm! That is what I meant, only I never could say it out till now." Thus do art and nature speak for us, and thus do we adopt them as our own. This is the way in which His righteousness becomes righteousness for us. This is the way in which the heart presents to God the sacrifice of Christ; gazing on

that perfect life, we, as it were, say, "There, that is my religion—that is my righteousness—what I want to be, which I am not—that is my offering, my life as I would wish to give it, freely and not checked, entire and perfect." So the old prophets, their hearts big with unutterable thoughts, searched "what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory which should follow;" and so with us, until it passes into prayer: "My Saviour, fill up the blurred and blotted sketch which my clumsy hand has drawn of a divine life, with the fullness of Thy perfect picture. I feel the beauty which I can not realize: robe me in Thine unutterable purity!"

II. The influence of that sacrifice on man is the introduction of the principle of self-sacrifice into his nature—"then were all dead." Observe, again, not He died that we might not die, but that in His death we might be dead, and that in His sacrifice we might become each a sacrifice to God. Moreover, this death is identical with life. They who in the first sentence are called dead are in the second denominated "they who live." So in another place, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." Death, therefore—that is, the sacrifice of self—is equivalent to life. Now this rests upon a profound truth. The death of Christ was a representation of the life of God. To me this is the profoundest of all truths, that the whole of the life of God is the sacrifice of self. God is love: love is sacrifice—to give rather than to receive—the blessedness of self-giving. If the life of God were not such, it would be a falsehood to say that God is love; for even in our human nature, that which seeks to enjoy all instead of giving all, is known by a very different name from that of love. All the life of God is a flow of this divine self-giving charity. Creation itself is sacrifice—the self-impartation of the divine Being. Redemption, too, is sacrifice, else it could not be love; for which reason we will not surrender one iota of the truth that the death of Christ was the sacrifice of God—the manifestation once in time, of that which is the eternal law of His life.

If man, therefore, is to rise into the life of God, he must be absorbed into the spirit of that sacrifice—he must die with Christ if he would enter into his proper life. For sin is the withdrawing into self and egotism, out of the vivifying life of God, which alone is our true life. The moment the man sins, he dies. Know we not how awfully true that sentence is, "Sin revived, and I died?" The vivid life of sin is the

death of the man. Have we never felt that our true existence has absolutely in that moment disappeared, and that *we* are not?

I say, therefore, that real human life is a perpetual completion and repetition of the sacrifice of Christ—"All are dead;" the explanation of which follows, "To live not to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again." This is the truth which lies at the bottom of the Romish doctrine of the mass. Rome asserts that in the mass a true and proper sacrifice is offered up for the sins of all—that the offering of Christ is forever repeated. To this Protestantism has objected vehemently, that there is but one offering once offered—an objection in itself entirely true—yet the Romish doctrine contains a truth which it is of importance to disengage from the gross and material form with which it has been overlaid. Let us hear St. Paul: "I fill up that which is behindhand of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church." Was there, then, something behindhand of Christ's sufferings remaining uncompleted, of which the sufferings of Paul could be in any sense the complement? He says there was. Could the sufferings of Paul for the Church in any form of correct expression be said to eke out the sufferings that were complete? In one sense it is true to say that there is one offering once offered *for* all. But it is equally true to say that that one offering is valueless, except so far as it is completed and repeated in the life and self-offering *of* all. This is the Christian's sacrifice. Not mechanically completed in the miserable materialism of the mass, but spiritually in the life of all in whom the Crucified lives. The sacrifice of Christ is done over again in every life which is lived, not to self, but to God.

Let one concluding observation be made—self-denial, self-sacrifice, self-surrender! Hard doctrines, and impossible! Whereupon in silent hours, we skeptically ask, Is this possible? is it natural? Let preacher and moralist say what they will, I am not here to sacrifice myself for others. God sent me here for happiness, not misery. Now introduce one sentence of this text, of which we have as yet said nothing, and the dark doctrine becomes illuminated—"the *love* of Christ constraineth us." Self-denial, for the sake of self-denial, does no good; self-sacrifice for its own sake is no religious act at all. If you give up a meal for the sake of showing power over self, or for the sake of self-discipline, it is the most miserable of all delusions. You are not more religious in doing this than before. This is mere self-culture, and self-culture, being occupied forever about self, leaves you

only in that circle of self from which religion is to free you ; but to give up a meal that one you love may have it, is properly a religious act—no hard and dismal duty, because made easy by affection. To bear pain for the sake of bearing it, has in it no moral quality at all, but to bear it rather than surrender truth, or in order to save another, is positive enjoyment, as well as ennobling to the soul. Did you ever receive a blow meant for another in order to shield that other ? Do you not know that there was actual pleasure in the keen pain far beyond the most rapturous thrill of nerve which could be gained from pleasure in the midst of painlessness ? Is not the mystic yearning of love expressed in words most purely thus, *Let me suffer for him ?*

This element of love is that which makes this doctrine an intelligible and blessed truth. Self-sacrifice alone, bare and unrelieved, is ghastly, unnatural, and dead ; but self-sacrifice, illuminated by love, is warmth and life ; it is the death of Christ, the life of God, the blessedness and only proper life of man.

## LECTURE XLVI.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 18-21. *December 12, 1852.*

THE last verses on which we spoke declared the Christian aspect of human nature, and the law of regenerated humanity. The aspect of humanity in Christ is a new creation : in Him human nature is re-created (ver. 17). Consequently, every one is to be looked at now, not merely as a man, but as a brother in Christ. No man is to be known now any more after the flesh. A more striking instance of this is not to be found than the way in which Philemon was desired by St. Paul to consider Onesimus his slave. The "middle wall of partition" has been broken down forever between Jew and Gentile, between class and class.

The law of humanity in Christ is, that "they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them" (ver. 15). Such is the Christian law of sacrifice : to present our bodies and souls to Christ as a living offering. It is no longer the law of nature which rules our life, no longer self-preservation, self-indulgence ; but it is self-surrender towards God and towards man.

We come now to another subject, and the connection between it and the former is contained in the 18th verse. All this, says St. Paul, arises out of the reconciliation effected between God and man by Christ.

First, then, we will speak of Christ's work, the reconciliation of God to man.

Secondly, the work of the Christian ministry, the reconciliation of man to God.

I. God "hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." Now reconciliation is identical with atonement. In Romans, v. 11, the word "atonement" occurs, but on referring to the margin you will find that it is the same word which is here translated "reconciliation." Here, therefore, you might read: "Who hath *atoned* us to himself by Jesus Christ." We can not repeat this too often. The "atonement" of the Bible is the reconciliation between God and man.

Now atonement or reconciliation consists of two things: 1. The reconciliation of God to the world. 2. The reconciliation of the world to God.

1. We say that God needed a reconciliation. On the other hand, the Unitarian view is, that God requires nothing to reconcile Him to us, that He is reconciled already, that the only thing requisite is to reconcile man to God. It also declares that there is no wrath in God towards sinners, for punishment does not manifest indignation. Nothing can be more false, unphilosophical, and unscriptural. First of all, take one passage, which is decisive: "But now after that ye know God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" St. Paul is there describing the Christian state, and he declares that the being recognized of God is more characteristic of the Gospel state than recognizing God. "Know God:" here is man reconciled to God. "Are known of Him:" here is God reconciled to man. St. Paul holds it a more adequate representation of the Gospel to say, Ye are known of God, that is, God is reconciled to you—than to say, Ye know God, that is, ye are reconciled to God. So much for those persons who recognize the authority of Scripture, and assert at the same time that it does not speak of an atonement which reconciles God to man.

Next, it is perilous to explain away, as a mere figure of speech, those passages which speak of God as angry with sin. God is angry with the wicked, and the first proof of this is to be drawn from our own conscience. We feel that God is angry; and if that be but figurative, then it is only figurative to say that God is pleased. There must be some deep truth in those expressions, or else we lose the personality of God.

2. The second proof comes to us from the character of

Christ. He was the representative of God—of God under the limitations of humanity. Now Christ was “*angry*.” That, therefore, which God feels corresponds with that which in pure humanity is the emotion of anger. No other word, then, will adequately represent God’s feeling, but the human word *anger*. If we explain away such words, we lose the distinction between right and wrong: we lose belief in God; for you will end in believing there is no God at all, if you begin with-explaining away His feelings.

Again, it is said that God needs no reconciliation, because He is immutable. But remember that, God remaining immutable, and the sinner changing, God’s relation to the sinner changes. “God is love,” but love to good is hatred to evil. If you are evil, then God is your enemy. You change God by being changed yourself. You thus alter the relation; and hence St. James says, “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.”

Now the way in which the text speaks of the reconciliation of God to us is, “Not imputing their trespasses;” for the atonement is made when God no longer reckons the sinner guilty. Here is the mystery of the atonement. God is reconciled to men for Christ’s sake. Earnestly I insist that the atonement is through Christ. God is reconciled to humanity in Christ; then to us through Him; “God was in Christ.” It was a Divine humanity. To that humanity God is reconciled: there could be no enmity between God and Christ: “I and my Father are one.” To all those in whom Christ’s Spirit is, God imputes the righteousness which is as yet only seminal, germinal: a seed, not a tree; a spring, not a river; an aspiration, not an attainment; a righteousness in faith, not a righteousness in works. It is not, then, an actual righteousness, but an imputed righteousness. Hence we see what is meant by saying, “reconciled or atoned through Christ.” We do not mean that each man reconciles himself, as Christ did, by being righteous; but we mean that God views him favorably as partaking of that humanity which has been once exhibited on earth a holy, perfect, and divine thing. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.”

But we must distinguish this from a vulgar notion of the atonement. Some use it as meaning *appeasal*, not reconciliation; not that the All-Holy One was reconciled to humanity by seeing in it His own image, and received full satisfaction by beholding the perfect sacrifice of the will of the man to the will of God; but that not having taken out the full satisfaction of punishment in one place, He was content to do



it in the *other*. Justice, they say, must strike; and if He can strike the innocent, it is richer satisfaction of justice than striking the guilty. Strange justice! Unjust to let the guilty go free, but quite just to punish the innocent! So mournfully do we deface Christianity!

It is singular that the Romanists have a similar perversion. There are pictures which represent the Virgin as interposing between the world and her angry Son; laying bare her maternal bosom by way of appeal, and the Son yielding that to His mother's entreaty which He would not do for love. What the Virgin is to the Romanist, that is Christ to some Protestants. Observe that, according to both opinions, there are two distinct beings—one full of wrath, the other full of mercy. Those Romanists make Christ the person of fury, and Mary the person of mercy. Some Protestants represent God the Father as the wrathful being, and Christ as the loving one. But the principle in both views is the same.

No! this text contradicts that notion. It was not Christ appeasing His Father's wrath, but His Father descending into humanity through Him; and so, "by taking the manhood into God," reconciling the world unto Himself. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself." It was God's infinite love which redeemed the world, and not God's fury which was appeased. God created a Divine humanity, and so, changing the relation between man and Himself, reconciled Himself to man. And this Divine humanity sacrificed itself *for* us. It was a vicarious sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ was the meritorious cause of our acceptance. What was there in it which satisfied God? Was it the punishment inflicted? No! It was the free offering of Christ's will even unto death. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life for the sheep."

II. The work of the Christian ministry—the reconciliation of man to God.

Now distinguish Christ's position from ours. It was Christ's work to reconcile God to man. That is done, and done forever; we can not add any thing to it. That is a priestly power; and it is at our peril that we claim such a power. Ours is ministerial: His alone was priestly. We can not infuse supernatural virtue into baptismal water; we can not transform bread and wine into heavenly aliment. We can offer no sacrifice: the concluding sacrifice is done. "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." So far, then, as we represent any thing besides this as *necessary*, so far do we frustrate it, and turn the

Christian ministry into a sacrificial priesthood. We are doing as did the Galatians of old.

Therefore the whole work of the Christian ministry consists in declaring God as reconciled to man; and in beseeching with every variety of illustration, and every degree of earnestness, men to become reconciled to God. It is this which is *not* done. All are God's children by *right*; all are not God's children in fact. All are sons of God; but all have not the spirit of sons, "whereby they cry, Abba, Father." All are redeemed, all are not yet sanctified.

## LECTURE XLVII.

2 CORINTHIANS vi. 1-10. *December 19, 1852.*

THE last chapter closed with the subject of Reconciliation. It declared that the atonement between God and man consisted of two parts: God atoned to man by the work of Christ; man atoned to God by the work of the Christian ministry. For the work of the Christian minister presupposes the work of Christ; and his message is, "God is reconciled to you, be ye reconciled to God." In this sixth chapter, St. Paul proceeds with this ministry of reconciliation. We will consider:

I. His appeal.

II. The grounds of that appeal.

1. St. Paul's appeal was, "that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." *The grace of God.* Grace is favor, and the particular grace here spoken of is the reconciliation of God in Christ (vs. 14-19). That Christ died for all, and that God is reconciled to all—this is the state of grace. Now the word *grace* being exclusively a Scriptural one, seems mysterious, and is often misunderstood: it is supposed to be a mystical something infused into the soul. But grace is only God's favor, and a state of grace is the state in which all men are who have received the message of salvation which declares God's good-will towards them. So speaks St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. The Corinthians had received this grace; they were baptized into the name of God the Father, and Christ the Son. They were told that God was their Father and their Friend.

Now we shall understand what St. Paul meant by beseeching them not to receive that grace in vain. It was a ques-

tion once discussed with great theological vehemence, whether men who had once been recipients of grace could fall from it finally and irrevocably. Some replied warmly that they can, while others, with equal pertinacity, affirmed that it was impossible. Part of the cause of this disagreement may be taken away by agreeing on the meaning of the word *grace*. By grace some meant the Spirit of God, and they held that the soul which has once become one with God is His forever. Undoubtedly this has the sanction of Scripture in various forms of expression. For example, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom:" "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Again: "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand:" "While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition:" "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." We can not read these passages without perceiving that there is an inner circle of men in the kingdom of grace, in whom God's Spirit dwells, who are one with God, in whom His Holy Ghost is a well of water springing up into everlasting life—"the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."

On the other hand, by *grace* some meant that state in which all Christians are—as redeemed from the world by Christ's blood, called to be saints, and to whom the high privileges of God's Church are revealed. Now it is unquestionable that not all who are recipients of that grace, and redeemed into that mercy, will be saved. This first verse itself implies that they may receive the grace of God in vain. So says Christ: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Remember, too, the parable of the fig-tree in the vineyard, which was unfruitful and was sentenced. Again, such exhortations as "Quench not the Spirit," imply that he may be quenched. And such warnings as these: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;" and, again, "He that despised Moses's law died without mercy. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God?" prove that this grace received may yet be received in vain. These are very awful passages, and they prove at least that

if there be those in whom the Love of God is a perennial fountain of spiritual strength, yet there are also those to whom all the promises have been made in unfeigned sincerity, who have professed religion with warmth—nay, who in Christ's name have done many wonderful works—and yet to whom he shall declare at the last, "I never knew you." So near may we approach to the kingdom of God, and yet come short of attaining it!

## II. The grounds of the apostle's appeal:

1. The thought that the time of grace is limited. St. Paul quotes from Isaiah: "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee." Observe the principle on which this prophecy is quoted. Prophecy records the principle of God's dealings. Now here was a precedent, declaring the limitation of the time during which grace is open; and St. Paul applying it, says, "*Now.*" Just such a limited moment as there was in Isaiah's day, the same is now. Let us dwell upon this thought—that there is a day of grace; for example, the respite before the Flood: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." There was, then, a space allowed for repentance. Again, to Nineveh was given a respite of forty days. A year's grace was allotted to the fig-tree in the parable. Jerusalem, too, had such a day: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace:" but then her day of grace was past; her day of blindness had come.

Now that which is declared of the world before the Flood, of Nineveh, of the fig-tree, of Jerusalem, is the history of each separate soul. Every man has his day of grace: what in vulgar English we should call his "chance." There comes to each man a crisis in his destiny, when evil influences have been removed, or some strong impression made—after an illness, or an escape, or in some season of solitary thoughtfulness or disappointment. It were an awful thing to watch such a spirit, if we knew that he is on the trial now, by which his everlasting destiny is to be decided! It were more awful still to see a man who has passed the time of grace, and reached the time of blindness, and to know that the light is quenched forever, that he will go on as before, and live many years, and play his part in life, but that the Spirit of God will come back to that soul no more forever!

2. The second ground on which St. Paul urged his appeal was the earnest affectionateness of his own ministry. He appealed on the ground of the work of Christ, and on the

ground of the work of those who were co-operators with Christ. "We, then, as workers together with Him, beseech you" (ver. 1). This appeal is followed up by an account of his conduct as a fellow-worker: "Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed" (vs. 3, 4); which, again, is succeeded by that glorious and touching description of ministerial devotedness which no Christian can read without humiliation. It was the unexaggerated picture of a human life actually lived out in this selfish world of ours! Upon this I make two observations:

First: the true return for ministerial devotedness is a life given to God. St. Paul details the circumstances of his own rare ministry, and he asks in return, not the affection of the Corinthians, nor their admiration, but this: that they "receive not the grace of God in vain:" and again (ver. 13), "Now for a recompense in the same \* \* \* be ye also enlarged." To all human hearts affection is dear, and respect and veneration precious. But none of these things is true *payment*. Hence St. Paul says: "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my *joy and crown*, so stand fast in the Lord." And again he says, "As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus." And St. John, in his Second Epistle, writes: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth;" and again, in his Third Epistle, he says to Gaius: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." This, I do not say is, but ought to be, the spirit of every minister of Christ; to feel that nothing can reward him for such efforts as he may have been permitted to make—nothing, except the grace of God received, and life moulded in accordance with it. No deference, no love, no enthusiasm manifested for him, can make up for this. Far beyond all evil or good report, his eye ought to be fixed on one thing—God's truth, and the reception of it.

Secondly: the true apostolical succession. Much has been said and written to prove the ministers of the Church to be lineally descended from the Apostles; and, further, to prove that none but they are commissioned to preach God's word, to administer God's sacraments, or to convey the grace of Christ. We do not dispute this; we rather admit and assert it. For purposes of order, the Church requires a lineal succession; that is, authority delegated by those who have authority. But this is a poor line of succession—to take the outward descent as all, and to consider the inward as nothing. It is the same mistake that the Jews made in tracing their

descent from Abraham's person, and forgetting their spiritual descent from Abraham's Father.

Now the grounds of apostleship alleged here are all spiritual; *none* are external. Again, in the twelfth chapter of this Epistle St. Paul says: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." Thus St. Paul does not graft his right of appeal on any proud, priestly assumption, but on an inward likeness to Christ. Therefore the true apostolical succession is and must be a spiritual one. The power of God is not conveyed by physical contact, but by the reception of a Spirit. He is a true minister who is one from sharing in the spirit of an apostle, not from the ordination and descent from an apostle. True, there is a succession. The mind of Christ, as set forth in His Apostles, acts on other minds, whether by ideas or character, and produces likeness to itself. Love begets love; faith generates faith; lofty lives nourish the germs of exalted life in others. There is a spiritual birth. John was the successor of the spirit of Elias. Luther was the offspring of the mind of Paul. We are children of Abraham if we share in the faith of Abraham; we are the successors of the Apostles if we have a spirit similar to theirs.

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### LECTURE XLVIII.

2 CORINTHIANS vi. 11-18. *December 26, 1852.*

IN our last lecture we saw that St. Paul, after explaining the grace of God to a world reconciled in Christ, had besought the Corinthians not to receive that grace in vain. For a passage in Isaiah assured them that it might be in vain: it announced the awful truth that there is such a thing as a day of grace, and that that day is limited. Accordingly, as an ambassador first, and then as a fellow-worker with God, in which capacity he enumerates his sufferings and labors, St. Paul entreats them not to receive that grace in vain. In the close of this chapter he expresses more definitely his meaning. For a general entreaty to become a Christian is vague. Sanctification is made up of many particulars. To use the grace of God, is a duty composed of various branches. Two of these are chiefly dwelt on here: The duty of separation from the world, and of purification from evil.

To-day we shall only consider the former.

- I. The exuberance of apostolic affection.
- II. The recompense desired.

I. The apostle's affection overflows in an exuberant apostrophe: "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged" (ver. 11). His love was deep, and this flow of eloquence arose out of the expansion of his heart. But in explaining this we take the second clause first, as the former is the result of the latter.

First: "Our heart is enlarged." Now what makes this remark wonderful in the apostle's mouth is, that St. Paul had received a multitude of provocations from the Corinthians. They had denied the truthfulness of his ministry, charged him with interested motives, sneered at his manner, and held up to scorn the meanness of his appearance. In the face of this his heart expands!—partly with compassion. Their insults and haughty tone only impressed him with a sense of their need, with the feeling of their wandering ignorance. They were his "children." How could he resent even unmerited reproach from them, bound as they were to him by so dear a tie? He had suffered for them: He pardoned them, for they did it ignorantly. His spirit sought for them the only excuse it could. Thus spoke, before him, One who loved even more than he; for the same thought occurs in the dying words of Christ: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." How worthy a successor of his Master's spirit! How generous! What a well-spring of love, inexhaustible in its freshness as in its life! And this is the true test of *gracious* charity. Does the heart expand or narrow as life goes on?

If it narrows, if misconception or opposition wither love, be sure that that love had no root. If love is slain by injury, or even enmity, was it love in its truest sense? "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" And this love is given to all, partly from looking on all as immortal souls in Christ. The everlasting principle within make all the difference. For it is not the mere instinct of lovingness which makes the Christian: to love the soul in Christ, *imputing* righteousness to it as God does, knowing the powers it has in it to produce good—feeling what it should be, and what it may become, and loving it as Christ loved it—this is the Christian charity. Hold fast to love. If men wound your heart, let them not sour or embitter it; let them not shut up or narrow it; let them only expand it more and more, and be able always to say with St. Paul, "My heart is enlarged."

Secondly, St. Paul's eloquence: "Our mouth is open unto you." He might have shut his lips, and in dignified pride refused to plead his own cause. But instead, he speaks his thoughts aloud—freely, not cautiously; and, like Luther in after-times, lays his whole heart open to view. This he does in words which, even though a translation, and that translation from a language which was not the apostle's own, stirs the soul within us. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Be sure that a man who speaks so has nothing to conceal. St. Paul had no after-thought, no reservation in his life or on his lips: he was a genuine man, true in the innermost recesses of his spirit.

## II. The recompense desired.

He asked for the enlargement of their heart towards him: which was to be shown in their separation from the world. This is the only true recompense of ministerial work.

The subject is difficult always, and especially in connection with these texts, which were written for a particular time and purpose. Now in explaining any passage of Scripture, two things have to be done; first, to put ourselves in possession of the circumstances under which the words were spoken, to endeavor to realize the society, persons, feelings, and customs of the body of men, and of the time, to whom and in which the passage was addressed; secondly, to discern in what point and principles the passage corresponds with our circumstances. For otherwise we misinterpret Scripture, misled by words and superficial resemblances. This is what Christ meant in His description of the wise Scribe, who "brings out of his treasures things new and old." For the great office of the expounder is to adapt old principles to new circumstances, and to read the present through the past.

First, then, let us comprehend the words and the circumstances to which they applied. We take the passage, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Here the metaphor is drawn from two ill-matched animals dragging the same vehicle or plough: two animals of different sizes or tempers, who pull either different ways or with different degrees of speed. The plain import, then, of the figurative expression is, Separate from the unbelievers, avoid close intimacy with them. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing."

Next, let us consider the circumstances. Bear in mind what we learnt in the First Epistle: one of the great parties at Corinth was the party of "liberty." They knew the



freeness of Christ's Gospel; they understood that the distinction of days was done away with, that there was no difference between clean and unclean meats, that flesh offered to idols was not polluted. They comprehended that all the Jewish ceremonial holiness was but typical, and that the separateness of "touch not, taste not, handle not," was done away with. Now the danger which these persons incurred was that, breaking down every barrier, they left nothing between themselves and evil. They prided themselves on their liberty, they went to idol feasts, they treated Saturday like Monday, they mixed freely with the world. Apparently, they were not even afraid to marry with the heathen; and in this daring admixture, and unrestrained indulgence in *all* things permitted, they ran the risk of gradually imbibing the spirit and temper of the world of evil with which they mingled. Accordingly, "Be ye not unequally yoked," meant, "Beware of sharing in the vices and corruption of the heathen."

Secondly, let us consider how to apply this injunction to our own times. Clearly the *letter* of the command is inapplicable; for in two points at least the parallel does not hold. First, heathen feasts do not exist among us. In the days of the apostle they were connected with abominable profligacy. And again, there is no sharp and marked distinction now, as there was then, between those who are and those who are not on the side of Christ. At that time baptism severed mankind into two great bodies, the world and the Church. But now, all being baptized, the command "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers," can not mean the same thing as it did then. Therefore only the *spirit* of the injunction can be applied to us. We may discern this from considering the grounds and reasons of the prohibition. Independent of the impossibility of agreement in the deepest sympathies, independent of there being no identity of tastes, no identity of antipathies, there were two strong grounds for this command.

1. The first ground was immorality: "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" In England we are an inconsistent people. A rigid barrier exists between class and class, and is almost never broken, except in two instances: wealth and talent break it down. Let a man amass enormous wealth, and he will find at his board the noblest in the land. It matters not that he became rich in some questionable way, that shrewd suspicions are entertained of foul practices and unfair means: no one asks about that. Again, talent of a certain class—that talent which amuses—breaks down the rigid line of demarkation. The

accomplished man or woman who, though notoriously profligate, can wile away an evening, is tolerated—nay, courted—even in the Christian drawing-room. Now, understand me, I do not say that the breaking down of conventional barriers is undesirable. If goodness did it—if a man low in birth were admired because of his virtues—oh! it would be well for this land of ours! But where wealth and talent, irrespective of goodness, alone possess the key to unlock our English exclusiveness, there plainly the apostolic injunction holds, because the reason of it holds: “What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” Separate, then; cut yourself adrift from the profligate man of wealth, from the immoral man of talent. If you must have dealing with them, let it be only in the way of business; but no intimacy, no friendship with them, should be yours.

2. The second ground was irreligion: “What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” There is much danger, however, in applying this law. It is perilous work when men begin to decide who are believers and who are not, if they decide by party badges. A man worships in a certain congregation, is taught by a certain minister, does not subscribe to certain societies; whereupon by that which arrogates to itself the title of the “religious world,” he is at once pronounced an unbeliever and not a Christian. This spirit besets our age, it is rife in this town, and demands the earnest protest of lip and life from every true man. For nothing more surely eats out the heart of religion, which is love, than this spirit of religious exclusiveness, and of judging others. Nothing more surely brings out the natural, innate popery of the heart. Better, far better than this, is it to risk the charge, falsely brought, which Christ endured, of being worldly, “a friend of publicans and sinners.” Nevertheless, there is an irreligion which “he who runs may read.” For the atheist is not merely he who professes unbelief, but, strictly speaking, every one who lives without God in the world. And the heretic is not merely he who has mistaken some Christian doctrine, but rather he who causes divisions among the brethren. And the idolater is not merely he who worships images, but he who gives his heart to something which is less than God; for a man’s god is that which has his whole soul and worship, that which he obeys and reverences as his highest. Now there are innumerable doubtful cases where charity is bound to hope the best; but there is also an abundance of plain cases: for where a man’s god is money, or position in society, or rank, there the rule holds, “Come ye apart.”

This, then, is the spirit of the passage: A law holds wherever the reason of it holds. Wherever union in the highest can not be, wherever *idem velle, atque idem nolle*, is impossible, there friendship and intimate partnership must not be tried. One word, however, as to the mode of this separation. It is not to be attained by an affectation of outward separateness. The spirit of vanity and worldly pride is not avoided by the outward plainness of Quakerism. Beneath the Quaker's sober, unworldly garb, there *may* be the canker of the love of gain; and beneath the guise of peace there may be the combative spirit, which is worse than war. Nor can you get rid of worldliness by placing a ban on particular places of entertainment, and particular societies. The world is a spirit rather than a form; and just as it is true that wherever two or three are met together in His name, God is in the midst of them, so, if your heart be at one with His Spirit, you *may*, in the midst of worldly amusements—yet not without great danger, for you will have multiplied temptations—keep yourself unspotted from the world.

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### LECTURE XLIX.

2 CORINTHIANS vii. 1. *January 2, 1853.*

THE recompense which St. Paul asked in return for his exuberant affection towards the Corinthians, was defined in our last lecture in two particulars: 1. Separation from the world. 2. Separation from all uncleanness. These were to be his reward; it was these the apostle longed for. It was not affection for himself that he desired, but devotion to God. We took the first part last Sunday—unworldliness, or separation from the world. To-day we will consider the second part of the recompense he asked—Personal Purification.

First, then, as to the ground of the request: "Having these promises." Now these promises are: the indwelling of God; His free reception of us; His Fatherhood and our sonship; and they are contained in the 16th, 17th, and 18th verses of the 6th chapter. But, first, observe the Gospel principle of action; it is not, Separate yourself from all uncleanness in order that you may *get a right* of sonship; but, *Because* ye are sons of God, therefore be pure. It is not, Work in order to be saved; but, *Because* you *are* saved, therefore work out your salvation. It is not, Labor that you may be accepted; but Labor, because you are accepted

in the Beloved. Christian action advances from the right of the sonship to the fact of sonship, and not *vice versa*. In other words: Ye are the sons of God: here are God's promises; therefore become what you are reckoned to be; let the righteousness which is *imputed* to you become righteousness *in* you. "Ye are the temple of God;" therefore cleanse yourself. God is your Father, therefore be pure. Thus we see that St. Paul first lays down Christian privileges, and then demands Christian action; and in this the mode of the Law is reversed. The Law says: "This do, and thou shalt live." The Gospel says: "This do, because thou *art* redeemed." We are to work, not in order to win life, but because life is already given. Only so far as we teach this principle, do we teach Christ's Gospel; it is salvation by grace, salvation by free grace, salvation by sovereign grace: it is God's favor freely given, without money and without price; not for worth, or goodness, or merit of ours. So speaks St. Paul: "After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us."

We all know the power and force of this kind of appeal. You know there are some things a soldier will not do, *because* he is a soldier: he is in uniform, and he can not disgrace his corps. There are some things of which a man of high birth and lineage is incapable: a long line of ancestry is a guarantee for his conduct: he has a character to sustain. Precisely on this ground is the Gospel appeal made to us. Ye are priests and kings to God; will you forget your office, and fall from your kingship? Shall an heir of glory disgrace his heavenly lineage? Ye are God's temple, in which He dwells: will you pollute *that*? Observe on what strong grounds we stand when we appeal to men as having been baptized. St. Paul spoke to all the Corinthians as being the temple of God. Now, if baptism were a magical ceremony, or if it were a conditional blessing, so that a baptized child were only God's child hypothetically, how could I appeal to this congregation? But since I am certain and sure that every man whom I address is God's child, that his baptism declared a fact which already existed, and that he is a recipient of God's loving influences, I, as Christ's minister, can and must say: "Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." I can say to every one of you: "Ye are the temple of God, therefore keep God's dwelling pure."

Secondly, let us consider the request itself. St. Paul demanded their holiness—that is, their separation from impurity; for holiness, or sanctification, meant, in the Jewish language, separation. In Jewish literalness it meant separation from external defilement. But the thing implied by this typical separation was that inward holiness of which St. Paul here speaks. We must keep ourselves apart, then, not only from sensual, but also from spiritual defilement. The Jewish law required only the purification of the flesh; the Gospel, which is the inner spirit of the Law, demands the purification of the spirit. The distinction is made in the Epistle to the Hebrews: “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Concerning the former, I will say but little now. There is a contamination which passes through the avenue of the senses, and sinks into the spirit. Who shall dislodge it thence? “Hear,” said Christ, “and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.” “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts.” The heart—the heart—there is the evil! The imagination, which was given to spiritualize the senses, is often turned into a means of sensualizing the spirit. Beware of reverie, and indulgence in forbidden images, unless you would introduce into your bosom a serpent, which will creep, and crawl, and leave the venom of its windings in your heart.

And now what is the remedy for this? How shall we avoid evil thoughts? First: by the fear of God—“Our God is a consuming fire.” Compare with this: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” An awful thought! a living God, infinitely pure, is conscious of your contaminated thoughts! So the only true courage sometimes comes from fear. We can not do without awe: there is no depth of character without it. Tender motives are not enough to restrain from sin; yet neither is awe enough. Love and Hope will keep us strong against passion, as they kept our Saviour strong in suffering, “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.”

Secondly: by the promises of God. Think of what you

are—a child of God, an heir of heaven. Realize the grandeur of saintliness, and you will shrink from degrading your soul and debasing your spirit. It is in reading saintly lives that we are ashamed of grovelling desires. To come down, however, from these sublime motives to simple rules, I say first of all, then, cultivate all generous and high feelings. A base appetite may be expelled by a nobler passion; the invasion of a country has sometimes waked men from low sensuality, has roused them to deeds of self-sacrifice, and left no access for the baser passions. An honorable affection can quench low and indiscriminate vice. “This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” I say, secondly, Seek exercise and occupation. If a man finds himself haunted by evil desires and unholy images, which will generally be at periodical hours, let him commit to memory passages of Scripture, or passages from the best writers in verse or prose. Let him store his mind with these, as safeguards to repeat when he lies awake in some restless night, or when despairing imaginations, or gloomy, suicidal thoughts, beset him. Let these be to him the sword, turning everywhere to keep the way of the Garden of Life from the intrusion of profaner footsteps.

Lastly: observe the entireness of this severance from evil—“*perfecting holiness.*” Perfection means, then, entireness, in opposition to one-sidedness. This is plain from many passages of Scripture. Thus: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect.” Again, it is not “Love them which love you,” but, “Love your enemies.” Again: “This also we wish, even your perfection:” “Not as though I had already attained,” says St. Paul, “either were already perfect:” and here he says, “*perfecting holiness.*” This expression seems to be suggested by the terms *flesh* and *spirit*; for the purification of the flesh alone would not be perfect, but superficial, holiness. Christian sanctification, therefore, is an entire and whole thing; it is nothing less than presenting the whole man a sacrifice to Christ. “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless.” For we should greatly mistake if we supposed the apostle meant here only one class of sins, when he speaks of purifying ourselves from “all filthiness in flesh and spirit:” for what are they which in Christ’s catalogue defile the man? They are thefts, blasphemies, evil witness, murders, as well as what we especially call sins of uncleanness.

## LECTURE L.

2 CORINTHIANS vii. 2-8. January 16, 1853.

THE remainder of this chapter, which we began last Sunday, is almost entirely personal, having reference to the relations existing between St. Paul and the Corinthian Church. In the sixth chapter he had spoken of his expressed affection towards them, and asked for a return. That return is contained in the words, "Be ye reconciled to God." We found that the reconciliation itself consisted of two particulars—separation from the world, and separation from all impurity. Subordinate to this is a request for the only personal acknowledgment and recompense they could make for his affection: "Receive us," said St. Paul: "let there be an affectionate understanding between us." Our subject to-day, therefore, chiefly bears on St. Paul's personal character—his feelings and ministerial conduct.

I. The ground on which he urged this request.

II. The grounds on which he hoped it.

I. He urged it on the ground that he deserved it. It was a simple matter of justice. "We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." Recollect the charges alleged against him: venality—preaching the Gospel for gain; and the accusation of the false teachers, who said, "He has overreached you—taken you in." Now the apostle meets these charges simply by an assertion of his innocence, but an assertion which appealed at the same time to their own witness. No one who read those words could doubt whether he was guilty, for there is a certain tone in innocence not easily mistaken. There are some voices that *ring* true. This reminds us of Samuel's purification of himself when laying down his judgeship. A worthy close! Two precedents are these, most worthy of thought, both for ministerial and secular life. Only consider how great in Samuel's case, and in St. Paul's, was the influence of integrity! There is nothing from which it so much behoves a public servant—especially one in a sacred office—to be perfectly free, as from the very suspicion of interested motives. If he can not say openly, and to his own heart,

"I have not been bribed either by the hope of favor or popularity, or by the dread of offending; neither personal fear nor personal hope has ever shaped one sentence, or modified one tone, or kept back one truth," he may rest assured his work can not stand. Honesty, uprightness, integrity of character, are sometimes called mere moral virtues; and religious people are too often deficient in these points: but the bright honor of the Apostle Paul was never stained. He could say, "I have wronged no man."

There is, however, one touch of graceful delicacy in the way he made this assertion of his innocence, which must not be passed over, if we would rightly appreciate the character of St. Paul. A coarser and ruder man would have cared for nothing but the proof of his own integrity. Now St. Paul perceived that the broad assertion of this might give pain. It might cover with confusion those who had suspected him. It might seem to them as if this were spoken *at them* in indirect reproach. It might even wound those who had not suspected him, as if his protest were a bitter reflection upon them. Therefore, he adds, "I speak not this to condemn you;" that is, "I am not defending myself against you, but to you. I am not reproaching you for past injustice: I only say these things to assure you of my undiminished love."

There was one thing in the character of St. Paul which often escapes observation. Carlyle calls him "an unkempt Apostle Paul;" and some say of him, "He was a man rude, brave, true, unpolished." We all know his integrity, his truth, his daring, his incorruptible honesty. But beside these, there was a refined and delicate courtesy, which was forever taking off the edge of his sharpest rebukes, and sensitively anticipating every pain his words might give: so that to have been rebuked by him would have been less painful than to be praised by most other men. Remember the exquisite courtesy with which his request to Philemon is put. Remember the delicate exception in his answer to Agrippa: "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Remember, too, how he pours love over one of his strongest condemnations in the Epistle to the Philippians: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now *tell you even weeping*, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."

This is something of the tender tact, the Christian art, which marks the character of this apostle. Observe, it is only love which can give that. It was not *high-breeding*; it was rather *good-breeding*. High-breeding gracefully in-



sists on its own rights: good-breeding gracefully remembers the right of others. We have all seen that dignified courtesy which belongs to high birth, which never offends as long as it is not personally harmed. But we know that that will not last: provocation makes it as bitter and as vulgar as the breeding of the most uncultured mechanic. Far—far above this, is the polish which the highest Christianity gives to the heart. It is not “gentility,” but gentleness. It is the wisdom from above, which is first pure, then *gentle*.

There is a rough, rude, straightforward honesty which is just and upright, which can say these words as St. Paul did: “I have wronged no man.” Perforce we respect such integrity. But Christianity requires something more: not gold only, but gold thrice refined; not a building of precious stones only, but of exquisite polish also; for there is a rough way, and a gentle way, of being true. Do not think that Christian polish weakens character, as polish thins the diamond. The polish of the world not only saps strength of character, but makes it even unnatural. Look at St. Paul, with all the grace of a feeling almost feminine in its sensitiveness—was there ever any thing in human character more daringly impassioned, more full of noble energy and childlike impulsiveness! That is what the grace of Christ can do.

II. The grounds for the apostle’s hope of a good understanding with the Corinthians. To put it in one word: he rested it on his candor; he hoped it, because he had been true with them in all his dealings: “Great is my boldness”—that is, freedom—“of speech towards you.” But let us explain. When we were going through the First Epistle, we found that a scandalous crime had been committed by a Corinthian Christian! it was the crime of incest. Now consider the difficulty in which St. Paul was placed. If he rebuked the Corinthians, he would probably destroy his own interest, and irreparably offend them. If he left the crime unnoticed, he might seem to connive at it, or gloss it over. Besides this, the subject was a delicate one to enter upon; it touched family honor and family feelings. Might it not be wise to leave the wound unprobed? Moreover, we all know how hard it is to deal harshly with the sins of those we love, of those to whom we are indebted, or who are indebted to us.

Any of these considerations might have made a less straightforward man silent. But St. Paul did not hesitate; he wrote off at once that First Epistle, which goes into the matter fully, with no false delicacy—calling wrong wrong, and laying upon those who permitted it and honored it

their full share of blame. Scarcely, however, had the apostle written the Epistle, and irrevocably sent it, than misgivings began to cross his mind, as we see in the 8th verse, where he says, "I did repent." To some persons this would be perplexing. They can not understand how an inspired apostle could regret what he had done: if it were by inspiration, what room could there be for misgivings? And if he regretted an act done under God's guidance, just as any common man might regret a foolish act, how could the apostle be inspired? But this, which might perplex some, exhibits the very beauty and naturalness of the whole narrative. God's inspiration does not take a man and make a passive machine of him, as a musician might use a flute, breathing through it what tones he pleases, while the flute itself is unconscious, unresisting, and unco-operating. When God inspires, His Spirit mixes with the spirit of man in the form of thought, not without struggles and misgivings of the human element. Otherwise it would not be human; it would not be inspiration *of* the man, but simply a Divine echo *through* the man. Very beautiful is this account of the inspired letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians—so real, so human, so natural!

These misgivings lasted a considerable time. In the 12th verse of the second chapter we learn that at Troas they had not subsided. He went there on his way to Macedonia, in order the sooner to meet Titus, with the reply from the Corinthians; and in this chapter we learn that these doubts had even gathered strength: "For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears."

Here I make a remark by the way: It is by passages such as these alone that we can appreciate and understand the real trials of apostles and missionaries. Here was a journey from Asia to Corinth, through various places. Now the obvious trials of such a course all could comprehend. Perils by sea; perils from the Jews; perils from governors; perils of travel; hardships and privations: these were not the trifles which tried a spirit like St. Paul's. For it is not hardships that are the wearing work of life. It is anxiety of heart and mind; it is the fretting, carking cares of deep solicitude: one sorrow, one deep, corroding anxiety, will wear deeper furrows in a cheek and brow than ten campaigns can do. One day's suspense will exhaust more, and leave the cheek paler than a week's fasting. Thus it is a low estimate of the depth of apostolic trial to say that physical suffering was its chief element. And if this be true, how much more

degrading is it so to treat of the sufferings of Christ, of whom the prophet said: "He shall see of the travail of His *soul*, and be satisfied." We degrade His life and death by pictures of His physical suffering and His bodily agony on the Cross. For it was not the nails that pierced His hands which wrung from Him the exceeding bitter cry, but the iron that had entered into His soul.

To return from this digression. In Macedonia St. Paul met Titus, bearing a letter from the Corinthians, by which it appeared that his rebuke had done its work. Instead of alienating, it had roused them to earnestness: they had purged themselves of complicity in the guilt by the punishment and excommunication of the offender. This was the apostle's comfort; and on this ground he built his sanguine hope that the Corinthians would receive him, and that there would be no more misunderstanding (ver. 7). Now let us see the personal application—the principles derivable from these facts.

First, I infer the value of explanations. Had St. Paul left the matter unsettled, or only half settled, there never could have been a hearty understanding between him and Corinth. There would have been forever a sense of a something reserved; there would have been a wound which never had been probed. Whenever, then, there is a misunderstanding between man and man, or harsh words reported to one as said by the other, the true remedy is a direct and open request for explanation. In the world's idea, this means satisfaction in the sense of revenge; in the Christian sense, it means examination in order to do mutual justice. The rule for this is laid down by Christ: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." It is the neglect of this rule of frankness that perpetuates misunderstandings. Suspicions lie hid, and burn, and rankle; and sentences and half sentences are reported by persons who do not *mean* to make mischief, but who effectually do so. Words are distorted and misconstrued, and two upright men, between whom one frank, open conversation would set all right, are separated forever.

Secondly, I infer the blessing, not merely the duty, of entire truthfulness. The affectionate relations between St. Paul and the Corinthians, though interrupted, were restored again, because he had been true. Candor and straightforwardness were the bond of attachment. Henceforward, however their friendship might be tried, however his love might be maligned, they would feel sure of him, and he

would never fear an explanation. A firm foundation had been laid for an abiding relation between the apostle and his Church. Learn, then, never to smooth away, through fear of results, the difficulties of love or friendship by concealment, or a subtle suppression of facts or feelings. Reprove, explain, submit with all gentleness, and yet with all truth and openness. The deadliest poison you can instill into the wine of life is a fearful reserve which creates suspicion, or a lie which will canker and kill your own love, and through that your friend's. The great blessings of this life are friendship and affection. Be sure that the only irreparable blight of both is falseness.

## LECTURE II.

2 CORINTHIANS vii. 9, 10.

THAT which is chiefly insisted on in these verses is the distinction between sorrow and repentance. To grieve over sin is one thing, to repent of it is another.

The apostle rejoiced, not that the Corinthians sorrowed, but that they sorrowed unto repentance. Sorrow has two results: it may end in spiritual life, or in spiritual death; and, in themselves, one of these is as natural as the other. Sorrow may produce two kinds of reformation—a transient, or a permanent one—an alteration in habits, which, originating in emotion, will last so long as that emotion continues, and then, after a few fruitless efforts, be given up—a repentance which will be repented of; or, again, a permanent change, which will be reversed by no after-thought—a repentance not to be repented of. Sorrow is in itself, therefore, a thing neither good nor bad: its value depends on the spirit of the person on whom it falls. Fire will inflame straw, soften iron, or harden clay: its effects are determined by the object with which it comes in contact. Warmth develops the energies of life, or helps the progress of decay. It is a great power in the hot-house, a great power also in the coffin; it expands the leaf, matures the fruit, adds precocious vigor to vegetable life: and warmth, too, develops with tenfold rapidity the weltering process of dissolution. So, too, with sorrow. There are spirits in which it develops the seminal principle of life; there are others in which it prematurely hastens the consummation of irreparable decay. Our subject, therefore, is the twofold power of sorrow:

- I. The fatal power of the sorrow of the world.
- II. The life-giving power of the sorrow that is after God.

I. The simplest way in which the sorrow of the world works death is seen in the effect of mere regret for worldly loss. There are certain advantages with which we come into the world. Youth, health, friends, and sometimes property; so long as these are continued we are happy; and because happy, fancy ourselves very grateful to God. We bask in the sunshine of His gifts, and this pleasant sensation of sunning ourselves in life we call religion: that state in which we all are, before sorrow comes, to test the temper of the metal of which our souls are made, when the spirits are unbroken and the heart buoyant, when a fresh morning is to a young heart what it is to the skylark. The exuberant burst of joy seems a spontaneous hymn to the Father of all blessing, like the matin carol of the bird; but this is not religion: it is the instinctive utterance of happy feeling, having as little of moral character in it, in the happy human being, as in the happy bird. Nay more—the religion which is only sunned into being by happiness is a suspicious thing: having been warmed by joy, it will become cold when joy is over; and then, when these blessings are removed, we count ourselves hardly treated, as if we had been defrauded of a right; rebellious, hard feelings come; then it is you see people become bitter, spiteful, discontented. At every step in the solemn path of life, something must be mourned which will come back no more; the temper that was so smooth becomes rugged and uneven; the benevolence that expanded upon all narrows into a never-dwindling selfishness—we are alone; and then that death-like loneliness deepens as life goes on. The course of man is downward, and he moves with slow and ever more solitary steps, down to the dark silence—the silence of the grave. This is the death of heart; the sorrow of the world has worked death.

Again, there is a sorrow of the world, when sin is grieved for in a worldly spirit. There are two views of sin: in one it is looked upon as wrong—in the other, as producing loss—loss, for example, of character. In such cases, if character could be preserved before the world, grief would not come; but the paroxysms of misery fall upon our proud spirit when our guilt is made public. The most distinct instance we have of this is in the life of Saul. In the midst of his apparent grief, the thing still uppermost was that he had forfeited his kingly character: almost the only longing was, that Samuel should honor him before his people. And hence it comes to

pass that often remorse and anguish only begin with exposure. Suicide takes place, not when the act of wrong is done, but when the guilt is known; and hence, too, many a one becomes hardened who would otherwise have remained tolerably happy; in consequence of which we blame the exposure, not the guilt; we say, if it had hushed up, all would have been well; that the servant who robbed his master was ruined by taking away his character; and that if the sin had been passed over, repentance might have taken place, and he might have remained a respectable member of society. Do not think so. It is quite true that remorse was produced by exposure, and that the remorse was fatal; the sorrow which worked death arose from that exposure, and so far exposure may be called the cause: had it never taken place, respectability, and comparative peace, might have continued; but outward respectability is not change of heart.

It is well known that the corpse has been preserved for centuries in the iceberg, or in antiseptic peat; and that when atmospheric air was introduced to the exposed surface it crumbled into dust. Exposure worked dissolution, but it only manifested the death which was already there. So with sorrow; it is not the living heart which drops to pieces, or crumbles into dust, when it is revealed. Exposure did not work death in the Corinthian sinner, but life.

There is another form of grief for sin, which the apostle would not have rejoiced to see; it is when the hot tears come from pride. No two tones of feeling, apparently similar, are more unlike than that in which Saul exclaimed, "I have played the fool exceedingly," and that in which the publican cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The charge of folly brought against one's self only proves that we feel bitterly for having lost our own self-respect. It is a humiliation to have forfeited the idea which a man had formed of his own character—to find that the very excellence on which he prided himself is the one in which he has failed. If there were a virtue for which Saul was conspicuous, it was generosity; yet it was exactly in this point of generosity in which he discovered himself to have failed, when he was overtaken on the mountain, and his life spared by the very man whom he was hunting to the death, with feelings of the meanest jealousy. Yet there was no real repentance there; there was none of that in which a man is sick of state and pomp. Saul could still rejoice in regal splendor, go about complaining of himself to the Ziphites, as if he was the most ill-treated and friendless of mankind; he was still jealous of his reputation, and anxious to be well thought of. Quite different

is the tone in which the publican, who felt himself a sinner, asked for mercy. He heard the contumelious expression of the Pharisee, "this publican," with no resentment; he meekly bore it as a matter naturally to be taken for granted—"he did not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven;" he was as a worm which turns in agony, but not revenge, upon the foot which treads it into the dust.

Now this sorrow of Saul's, too, works death: no merit can restore self-respect; when once a man has found himself out, he can not be deceived again. The heart is as a stone: a speck of canker corrodes and spreads within. What on this earth remains but endless sorrow for him who has ceased to respect himself, and has no God to turn to?

## II. The divine power of sorrow.

1. It works repentance. By repentance is meant, in Scripture, change of life, alteration of habits, renewal of heart. This is the aim and meaning of all sorrow. The consequences of sin are meant to wean from sin. The penalty annexed to it is, in the first instance, corrective, not penal. Fire burns the child, to teach it one of the truths of this universe—the property of fire to burn. The first time it cuts its hand with a sharp knife, it has gained a lesson which it never will forget. Now, in the case of pain, this experience is seldom, if ever, in vain. There is little chance of a child forgetting that fire will burn, and that sharp steel will cut; but the moral lessons contained in the penalties annexed to wrong-doing are just as truly intended, though they are by no means so unerring in enforcing their application. The fever in the veins and the headache which succeed intoxication are meant to warn against excess. On the first occasion they are simply corrective; in every succeeding one they assume more and more a penal character in proportion as the conscience carries with them the sense of ill desert.

Sorrow, then, has done its work when it deters from evil; in other words, when it works repentance. In the sorrow of the world, the obliquity of the heart towards evil is not cured; it seems as if nothing cured it; heartache and trials come in vain; the history of life at last is what it was at first. The man is found erring where he erred before. The same course, begun with the certainty of the same desperate end which has taken place so often before.

They have reaped the whirlwind, but they will again sow the wind. Hence I believe that life-giving sorrow is less remorse for that which is irreparable, than anxiety to save that which remains. The sorrow that ends in death hangs in fu-

neral weeds over the sepulchres of the past. Yet the present does not become more wise. Not one resolution is made more firm, nor one habit more holy. Grief is all. Whereas sorrow avails *only* when the past is converted into experience, and from failure lessons are learned which never are to be forgotten.

2. Permanence of alteration; for, after all, a steady reformation is a more decisive test of the value of mourning than depth of grief.

The susceptibility of emotion varies with individuals. Some men feel intensely, others suffer less keenly; but this is constitutional, belonging to nervous temperament rather than moral character. *This* is the characteristic of the divine sorrow, that it is a repentance "not repented of;" no transient, short-lived resolutions, but sustained resolve.

And the beautiful law is, that in proportion as the repentance increases the grief diminishes. "I rejoice," says Paul, that "I made you sorry, though it were *but for a time*." Grief for a time, repentance forever. And few things more signally prove the wisdom of this apostle than his way of dealing with this grief of the Corinthian. He tried no artificial means of intensifying it—did not urge the duty of dwelling upon it, magnifying it, nor even of gauging and examining it. So soon as grief had done its work, the apostle was anxious to dry useless tears—he even feared "lest haply such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." "A true penitent," says Mr. Newman, "never forgives himself." Oh false estimate of the Gospel of Christ, and of the heart of man! A proud remorse does not forgive itself the forfeiture of its own dignity; but it is the very beauty of the penitence which is according to God, that at last the sinner, realizing God's forgiveness, does learn to forgive himself. For what other purpose did St. Paul command the Church of Corinth to give ecclesiastical absolution, but in order to afford a symbol and assurance of the Divine pardon, in which the guilty man's grief should not be overwhelming, but that he should become reconciled to himself. What is meant by the publican's going down to his house justified, but that he felt at peace with himself and God?

3. It is sorrow with God—here called "godly sorrow;" in the margin, "sorrowing according to God."

God sees sin not in its consequences, but in itself; a thing infinitely evil, even if the consequences were happiness to the guilty instead of misery. So sorrow according to God, is to see sin as God sees it. The grief of Peter was as bitter as that of Judas. He went out and wept bitterly; how bitter-



ly none can tell but they who have learned to look on sin as God does. But in Peter's grief there was an element of hope; and that sprang precisely from this—that he saw God in it all. Despair of self did not lead to despair of God.

This is the great, peculiar feature of this sorrow: God is there, accordingly self is less prominent. It is not a microscopic self-examination, nor a mourning in which self is ever uppermost: *my* character gone; the greatness of *my* sin; the forfeiture of *my* salvation. The thought of God absorbs all that. I believe the feeling of true penitence would express itself in such words as these: There *is* a righteousness, though I have not attained it. There is a purity, and a love, and a beauty, though my life exhibits little of it. In that I can rejoice. Of that I can feel the surpassing loveliness. My doings? They are worthless, I can not endure to think of them. I am not thinking of them. I have something else to think of. There, there; in that life I see it. And so the Christian—gazing not on what he is, but on what he desires to be—dares in penitence to say, That righteousness is mine; dares, even when the recollection of his sin is most vivid and most poignant, to say with Peter, thinking less of himself than of God, and sorrowing, as it were, with God—"Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee."

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## LECTURE LII.

2 CORINTHIANS vii. 11-16. *January 30, 1853.*

TO-DAY we touch upon the last of those notices respecting St. Paul's treatment of the incestuous Corinthian, which have so repeatedly interwoven themselves with the argument of the First and Second Epistles. The general subject has successively brought before us the nature of human punishment, as not being merely reformatory, nor exemplary, nor for safety's sake, but also as being declarative of the indignation of society, and, through society, of the indignation of God against sin. Again, it has taught us to consider excommunication and absolution, and what these ecclesiastical words express; and also to consider the power of binding and loosing lodged in humanity—an actual and awful power, often used with fearful injustice and evil results: as when a person, cut off forever from return, is driven to despair, "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."

Now these are real powers, dispute as men may about the

ecclesiastical meaning to be given to them. Every one daily, and often unconsciously, exercises them; and to do this rightly is no easy task; for it is difficult to punish wisely, and it is equally difficult to forgive wisely. It is rare even that we rebuke in a true and prudent spirit. Hence the whole history of St. Paul's dealing with this offender is one of exceeding value, being so full of wisdom, firmness, justice, and exquisite tenderness. Most truly it is an inexhaustible subject! The portion of it which we shall consider to-day is the Christian manner of rebuke. We take two points:

I. The spirit of apostolical rebuke.

II. The apostolical doctrine of repentance.

I. The spirit of apostolical rebuke. It was marked by unflinching severity: "I do not repent; \* \* \* for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing." St. Paul rejoiced, then, in the pain he had inflicted: his censure had not been weak: severely, truthfully he had rebuked. Let us inquire the reason of this joy. St. Paul rejoiced because the pain was transitory, while the good was permanent; because the sorrow was for a time, but the blessing forever; because the suffering was in this world, but the salvation for eternity: for the sinner had been delivered to "Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The criminal had undergone public shame and public humiliation; his had been private grief, and many searchings of heart; and all this had not only taught him a lesson which never could be forgotten, and strengthened him by terrible discipline against future weakness, but also had set up for the Corinthians a higher standard, and vindicated the purity of Christian life and the dignity of the Christian Church. This was the pain, and these were its results. Seeing these results, St. Paul steadily contemplated the necessary suffering.

Let us now infer from this a great truth—the misfortune of non-detection. They who have done wrong congratulate themselves upon not being found out. Boys sin by disobedience; men commit crimes against society, and their natural impulse is to hush all up, and if what they have done is undiscovered, to consider it a happy escape. Now the worst misfortune that can happen is to sin and to escape detection: shame and sorrow do God's work, as nothing else can do it. We can readily conceive that, if this shame and scandal had

been hushed up, then the offender would have thought it a fortunate escape, and sinned again. A sin undetected is the soil out of which fresh sin will grow. Somehow, like a bullet-wound, the internal evil *must* come out in the face of day, be *found* out, or else be acknowledged by confession. I do not say it should be disclosed publicly. It suffices if a few—or even one person only—have known it, and then condemned and absolved the offender.

Let me ask, then, who here is congratulating himself, is whispering to his own heart, My sin is not known, I shall not be disgraced, nor punished? Think you that, because undetected, you will escape with impunity? No—never! Your sin is there, rankling in your heart: your wound is not probed, but only healed over falsely; and it will break out in the future, more corrupted and more painful than before.

Secondly: the apostle's rebuke was marked by the desire of doing good. It is a thing common enough to be severe. We are severe enough on one another, both in our view of public punishment and in our condemnation of one another's faults. But the question is, What is at the bottom of this zeal? It is no rare thing to find men who can be severe in rebuke: but the thing which is uppermost is evidently themselves—their own fidelity, courage, and truthfulness. They tell you of your faults, but you feel it is not your reformation, but their own vain-glory they are trying to secure. Now St. Paul was not thinking of himself, but of the Corinthians. This is manifest from several verses in this chapter. Take the 9th: "That ye might receive damage by us in nothing;" or the 11th: "In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter;" or the 16th: "I rejoice, therefore, that I have confidence in you in all things." The apostle was not delivering his own soul, but he was trying to save their souls.

Let us, therefore, examine ourselves. We blame, and find fault, and pass judgment upon our neighbor freely; we boldly condemn public men. Why is this? Is it to show to ourselves and others how good we are—how we can not abide sin? or is it to do good? It is often a duty to express disapprobation strongly and severely, to discountenance vice most earnestly; but then we do it not in St. Paul's spirit unless it is done for the sake of amelioration.

Thirdly: the apostle's rebuke was marked by a spirit of justice. We refer to the 12th verse: "Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you."

That is, his interference was not partisanship. There was in it no taking of a side, no espousing the cause of the injured, nor *mere* bitterness against the criminal; but a holy, godly zeal, full of indignation, but not of vindictiveness. In one word, it was Justice. Now this is exactly what some of the best among us find most difficult—those especially of us who possess quick, sensitive, right, and generous feelings. We can be charitable, we can be indignant, we can forgive; but we are not just. Especially is this the case with women: the natural sensitiveness and quick nature of their feelings, particularly in their conceptions of right and wrong, hinder them from looking at things calmly enough to judge correctly. Again: this justice is most difficult when religious interests are involved; as, for example, in the quarrel between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, who judges fairly? To be just is not easy: for many qualities go to make up justice. It is founded on forbearance, self-control, patience to examine both sides, and freedom from personal passion.

Fourthly: St. Paul's rebuke was marked by joyful sympathy in the restoration of the erring. Very beautiful is the union of the hearts of Paul and Titus in joy over the recovered—joy as of the angels in heaven over “one sinner that repenteth.”

II. The apostolic doctrine of repentance. St. Paul rejoiced because the Corinthians sorrowed: but in doing so he carefully distinguished the kind of sorrow which he rejoiced to have caused. In order to follow him we must see what different kinds of sorrow there are.

1. The sorrow of the world, which is not desirable, because it is *of* the world. There is an anxiety about loss, about the consequences of misdoing, about a ruined reputation, about a narrowed sphere of action. Now sin brings all these things; but to sorrow for them is not to sorrow before God. To sorrow for such things is only a worldly grief, because it is only about worldly things. Observe, therefore, that pain, simply as pain, does no good; that sorrow, merely as sorrow, has in it no magical efficacy: shame may harden into effrontery, punishment may rouse into defiance. Again, pain self-inflicted does no good. It is a great error when men, perceiving that God's natural penalties and hardships strengthen and purify the spirit, think to attain to a similar good by forcing such penalties and hardships upon themselves.

It is true that fire, borne for the sake of truth, is martyrdom; but the hand burnt in ascetic severity does not give

the crown of martyrdom, nor even inspire the martyr's feeling. Fastings, such as St. Paul bore from inability to get food, give spiritual strength; but fastings endured for mere exercise often do no more than produce feverishness of temper. This holds good, likewise, of bereavement. The loss of those dear to us—relations and friends—when it is borne as coming from God, has the effect of strengthening and purifying the character. But to bring sorrow willfully upon ourselves can be of no avail towards improvement. The difference between these two things lies in this, that when God inflicts the blow, He gives the strength; but when you give it to yourself, God does not promise aid. Be sure this world has enough of the Cross in it: you need not go out of your way to seek it. Be sure there will always be enough of humiliation, and shame, and solitariness for each man to bear if he be living the Christ-life. They need not be self-inflicted.

2. The sorrow of this world is not desirable, because it "works death;" and this it does in two ways, literally and figuratively. And first, literally: we do not need instances to show that there is nothing like wearing sorrow to shorten life. Death from a broken heart is not uncommon; and when this is not the case, how often have we seen that the days of existence are abridged, the hair grows gray, all the fresh springs of being are dried up, and all the vigor and force of brain and life decay! When the terror of sorrow came on Nabal, his heart became as a stone, and died within him, and in ten days all was over. When the evil tidings came from the host of Israel, the heart of the wife of Phinehas broke beneath her grief, and in a few hours death followed her bereavement.

Figuratively, too, the sorrow of this world "works death;" for grief, unalloyed with hope, kills the soul, and man becomes powerless in a protracted sorrow where hope in God is not. The mind will not work; it feels no vigor; there is no desire to succeed, no impulse to undertake, for the spirit of enterprise and the eagerness in action are over and gone forever. The zest of existence is no more: "the wine of life is drawn." Hours, days, and years drag on in feeling's sickly mood; and the only things which pass not away are melancholy and uselessness, now become "the habit of the soul."

Once more: the sorrow of this world "works death" spiritually. Grief works death. It is a fearful thing to see how some men are made worse by trial. It is terrible to watch sorrow as it sours the temper, and works out into malevolence and misanthropy. Opposition makes them

proud and defiant. Blow after blow falls on them, and they bear all in the hardness of a sullen silence.

Such a man was Saul, the first king of Israel, whose earlier career was so bright and glorious, to whom all that lay before and around him seemed only to augur happiness. These all gradually darkened, and a something was at work at the heart of his life. Defeat and misfortune gradually soured his temper, and made him bitter and cruel. The fits of moody grief became more frequent, and then came quickly sin on sin, and woe on woe. Jealousy passed into disobedience, and insanity into suicide. The sorrow of the world had "worked death."

The second kind of sorrow we mentioned is godly sorrow, and we will consider—first, its marks; secondly, its results.

1. Its marks. Over these we shall run rapidly. Moral earnestness, which is here, in the 11th verse, called "carefulness." My brethren, the one difficulty in life is to be in earnest. All this world in the gala-day seems but a passing, unreal show. We dance, light-hearted, along the ways of existence, and nothing tells us that the earth is hollow to our tread. But soon some deep grief comes, and shocks us into reality; the solid earth rocks beneath our feet: the awfulness of life meets us face to face in the desert. Then the value of things is seen; then it is that godly sorrow produces carefulness; then it is that, like Jacob, we cry, "How awful is this place! how solemn is this life! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" Then it is that with moral earnestness we set forth, walking circumspectly, weighing, with a watchful and sober eye, all the acts and thoughts which make up life.

Next, this godly sorrow "worketh fear:" not an unworthy terror, but the opposite of that light recklessness which lives only from day to day. Again, it worketh "vehement desire"—that is, affection; for true sorrow—sorrow to God—softens, not hardens the soul. It opens sympathies, for it teaches what others suffer; it gives a deeper power of sympathy and consolation, for only through suffering can you win the Godlike ability of feeling for other's pain. It expands affection, for your sorrow makes you accordant with the "still, sad music" of humanity. A true sorrow is that "deep grief which humanizes the soul;" often out of it comes that late remorse of love which leads us to arise and go to our Father, and say, "I have sinned against Heaven and in Thy sight."

Again, "clearing of themselves"—that is, anxiety about character. Some one has said that "to justify one's deeds unto one's self is the last infirmity of evil;" he means that

when we cease to do that, then evil is strong; for as long as a man excuses himself, there is hope. He has at least a standard of right and wrong still left. Now there is a recklessness of grief for sin, out of which a man wakes when he begins to feel hope, and tries to wipe off the past, when, in St. Paul's words, a godly sorrow urges him to *clear* himself.

Lastly, it is a sorrow which produces "revenge." We interpret this as indignation against wrong in others and in ourselves. Nowhere is this more remarkable than in David's Psalms; and though these are personal, yet still the feeling which gave them birth is a deep and true one, without which all goodness is but feebleness. These together make up repentance unto salvation.

Finally, the results: 1. "Not to be repented of." "Sorrow's memory is sorrow still." No! not *that* sorrow. No man ever mourned over the time spent in tears for sin. No man ever looked back upon that healing period of his life as time lost. No man ever regretted things given up or pleasures sacrificed for God's sake. No man on his dying bed ever felt a pang for the suffering sin had brought on him, if it had led him in all humbleness to Christ. No man ever regretted the agony of conquest when he felt the weight upon his heart to be less through sorrow even by a single sin. But how many a man on his death-bed has felt the recollection of guilty pleasures as the serpent's fang and venom in his soul!

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### LECTURE LIII.

2 CORINTHIANS viii. 1-12. *February 20, 1853.*

IN the last chapter of the First Epistle mention was made of a contribution which the Corinthians were systematically to store up for the poor brethren at Jerusalem. To-day we enter on a fresh treatment of the same topic, and on a subject different from those we have lately been engaged with. This contribution St. Paul collected in his journeys from the Christian churches. In this chapter he records the largeness of the sum which had been given him by the churches of Macedonia, and urges the Church of Corinth to emulate their example. We consider two points:

- I. Nature of Christian liberality.
- II. Motives urged on the Corinthians.

I. Nature of Christian liberality as exemplified in that of

the churches of Macedonia. First, it was a grace bestowed from God: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia" (ver. 1). And again: "Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also" (ver. 6.)

Now there are many reasons besides this mentioned by St. Paul which make liberality desirable. For example, there is utility. By liberality hospitals are supported, missions are established, social disorders are partially healed. But St. Paul does not take the utilitarian ground; though in its way it is a true one. Again, he does not take another ground advanced by some, that liberality is merely for the advantage of the persons relieved: "For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened" (ver. 13): as if the benefit of the poor were the main end; as if God cared for the poor, and not for the rich; as if to get from those who have, and bestow on those who have not, were the object of inciting to liberality. St. Paul distinctly denies this. He takes the higher ground: it is a grace of God. He contemplates the benefit to the soul of the giver. Charity is useful, but also *lovely*: not a mere engine in our nature to work for social purposes, but that which is likest God in the soul.

Secondly: Christian liberality was the work of a willing mind: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (ver. 12). Plainly, it is not the value of the contribution, but the love of the contributor which makes it precious. The offering is sanctified or made unholy in God's sight by the spirit in which it is given. The most striking passage in which this truth is illustrated is that of the widow's mite. Tried by the gauge of the treasurer of a charity, it was next to nothing. Tried by the test of charity, it was more than that of all. Her coins, worthless in the eyes of the rich Pharisee, were in the eyes of Christ transformed by her love into the gold of the Eternal City.

Yet St. Paul does not say that a willing mind is all. He makes a wise addition: "Now therefore perform the *doing* of it." Because, true though it is that willingness is accepted where the means are not, yet where the means *are*, willingness is only tested by performance. Good feelings, good sentiments, charitable intentions, are only condensed in sacrifice. Test yourself by action: test your feelings and your fine liberal words by self-denial. Do not let life evaporate in slothful sympathies. You wish you were rich; and fancy that then you would make the poor happy, and spend your



life in blessing? Now—now is the time—now or never. Habituate your heart to acts of giving. Habituate your spirit to the thought that in all lives something is owed to God. Neglect this now, and you will not practise it more when rich. Charity is a habit of the soul, therefore now is the time. Let it be said, “He hath done what he *could*.”

Thirdly: the outpouring of poverty (ver. 2). As it was in the time of the apostle, so it is now. It was the poor widow who gave all. It was out of their deep poverty that the Macedonians were rich in liberality. There is something awful in those expressions of Scripture which speak of riches as shutting up the soul. “It is easier,” said Christ, “for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God:” “Not many mighty, not many noble are called,” writes St. Paul. Again: “Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.”

Now we do not expect these sayings to be believed: they are explained away. No man *fears* riches, yet it is a fact, generally, that a man’s liberality does not increase in proportion as he grows rich. It is exactly the reverse. He extends his desires; luxuries become necessities. He must move in another sphere, keep more servants, and take a larger house. And so in the end, his liberality becomes proportionately less than what it was before. Let any one who has experienced an advance of wealth compare his expenditure when he had but a few annual pounds with his expenditure after he became rich. Let any one compare the sums given in charity by those of moderate income with the sums given by the wealthy. Here, in England, the rich give their hundreds, the poor their thousands. There are many things to account for this fact. The rich have large liabilities to meet: or they possess large establishments which must be kept up. There is a growing sense of money’s value, when each sovereign stands for so much time. Still, whatever may be the mitigating circumstances, the fact remains. And the inferences from it are two:

1. Let this circumstance be a set-off against poverty and privations. God has made charity easier to you who are not the rich of this world, and saved you from many a sore temptation. It is written, “Better is a dinner of herbs where *love* is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.”

2. Let this fact weaken the thirst for riches, which is the great longing of our day: “The wealthiest man among us is the best.” Doubtless riches are a good; but remember that the Bible, if it be true, is full of warnings respecting them.

Think alone of this one: "They that *will* be rich fall into temptation and a snare."

Fourthly: it is a peculiarity in Christian liberality that it is exhibited to strangers. In the case before us, the charity was displayed in behalf of the poor at Jerusalem, and was a contribution sent from Gentiles to Jews. Love of Christ, then, had bridged over that gulf of ancient hatred. The Spirit of Christ had been given in these words: "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?" "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you." The power of these words, ratified by a Life, had spread through the ancient Church, and Gentile and Jew were united to each other by a common love. Now I say there is nothing but Christianity which can do this. Without Christ there must be dissension between race and race, family and family, man and man. Think of the old rancors of the heathen world. This spirit of dissension was the great question of ancient ages, and was the origin of their wars. In times before, the Dorian was matched against the Ionian, the Samaritan hated the Jew; and the Jew shrank from the pollution of the Samaritan, and looked on the Gentile as an outcast; until He came, who "is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition."

But it is said, philanthropy does this. Philanthropy! It is a dream without Christ. Why should I love the negro or the foreigner? You can give no reason except an opinion. Why should I not be as exclusive as I please, and shrink from other nations, and keep up national hatreds, when even the analogy of nature is on my side, and I see the other inhabitants of this planet waging war on one another, bird with bird, beast with beast? Well, in reply to that, Christianity reveals in Christ the truth which lies below our human nature—God. We are one in Christ—one family. Human blessedness is impossible except through union one with another. But union is impossible except in God.

This was the truth taught by the shew-bread piled upon the altar. Each loaf was offered for, and represented a tribe; and the whole twelve, with different characteristics and various interests, were yet one in God, and therefore one with each other. And this truth was realized in Christ, in whom all the tribes of the world and all the opposing elements of society meet and mingle. We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle.

These are the main characteristics of Christian liberality. But observe, this liberality is not necessarily the giving of money. Almsgiving is recommended in the Bible, but it is not necessarily the true form now in our altered state of things. For indiscriminate almsgiving is injurious both to the giver and the receiver: to the giver, as it encourages indolence; to the receiver, as it prevents independence and exertion. Again, remember there may be true liberality, when a man gives nothing to religious societies. Suppose he spends his money in employing labor wisely, suppose he gives good wages, suppose he invests capital in enterprises which call out the highest qualities—then such a man, although directly giving nothing, indirectly gives much, and is charitable in the true sense of the word.

## II. Motives to Christian liberality.

1. Christian completeness (ver. 7). The Corinthians were orthodox; they had strong convictions of the liberty of Christianity. Gifts of eloquence abounded in the Church; they were deeply grounded in truth: they were active in thought and active in work—nay more, they had much zeal and love for their teachers; and yet, without this liberality, their Christianity would have been most incomplete: “As ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.” The same idea is fully worked out in the 13th chapter of the First Epistle. Moreover, this verse exhibits the true conception of Christianity: It is not a set of views, nor is it faith, nor devotional feeling: but it is *completeness* of Humanity. We are to grow up in the knowledge of Christ, till we *all* come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man—to the “measure of the stature and fullness of Christ.” Again, St. Paul says: “This also we wish, even your perfection;” and to the Thessalonians: “I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless.” And Christ places this high standard before His disciples as their aim: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” For it is the work of Christ to take the whole man, and present him a living sacrifice to God.

2. Another motive of Christian liberality is emulation. Compare verses 1 to 8 of this chapter, and also the 11th chapter of Romans, at the 11th verse. Observe here the truth of Scripture. Ordinary, feeble philanthropy would say, “Emulation is dangerous.” Cowper calls it parent of envy, hatred, jealousy, and pride. Yet there is such a feeling as

emulation in our nature, and the Bible says it has a meaning; nay, is not wrong, but in its place a true and right affection of humanity. So St. Paul here took advantage of this feeling. The Macedonian Church had raised the standard of Christian liberality high, and the Corinthians are stimulated not to fall below that standard.

But had the apostle said, "Be not beaten by those Macedonians"—had he called natural prejudices into play—a Corinthian to yield to a Macedonian! then all the evil passions of our nature had been stimulated. In giving largely, the Corinthians would have learned to hate the Macedonians; and to give more for the sake of triumphing over them. Instead of this, St. Paul exhibits the Macedonians as worthy of admiration, and exhorts the Corinthians to enter the lists in honorable rivalry. Herein, I believe, lies the difference: Emulation, meaning a desire to outstrip individuals, is a perverted feeling; emulation, meaning a desire to reach and pass a standard, is a true feeling—the parent of all progress and of all excellence. Hence, set before you high models. Try to live with the most generous, and to observe their deeds. Unquestionably, good men set the *standard* of life.

3. The last motive alleged is the example of Christ (ver. 9). Here we must observe, first, that Christ is the reference for every thing. To Christ's life and Christ's spirit St. Paul refers all questions, both practical and speculative, for a solution. For all our mysterious human life refers itself back to Him. Christ's life is the measure of the world. Observe again, it is in spirit, and not in letter, that Christ is our example. The Corinthians were asked to give money for a special object, and Christ is brought forward as their example. But Christ did not give money, He gave Himself. His riches were perfect happiness; His poverty was humiliation; and He humbled Himself, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich. He gave Himself to bless the world. This, then, is the example; and it is the spirit of that example which the Corinthians are urged to imitate.

It was *giving*, it was love, that was the essence of the sacrifice. The form was a secondary thing. It was life in His case, it was money in theirs; the one thing needful was a love like His, which was the desire to give and to bless.

## LECTURE LIV.

2 CORINTHIANS viii. 13-15. *February 27, 1853.*

THE eighth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the latter part of which we enter on to-day, concerns a contribution collected by St. Paul from the Gentile Christians for the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem. Part of this we have already expounded, namely as regards the nature of Christian liberality, and the motives on which St. Paul urged it. But there still remain several points which we had not time to consider in the last lecture, and which are, nevertheless, only a continuation of the same subject.

Christian charity, we saw, was a "grace" of God, not merely useful, but also beautiful. We found it a thing whose true value is measured not by the amount given, but by the willingness of heart of the giver. We learned, also, that it springs up in the soil of poverty, rather than in that of wealth.

We considered, further, two motives on which St. Paul urges it: 1. Christian completeness. 2. Christian emulation. To-day we take two points more:

- I. The spirit in which he urged Christian liberality.
- II. The additional motives which he brought to bear.

I. The apostle spoke strongly: not in the way of coercion, but of counsel and persuasion. In the 8th verse he says, "I speak not by commandment;" and again, in the 10th, "And herein I give my advice." Both expressions taken together mean simply: "I do not order this, I only advise it." Now here is a peculiarity which belongs to the teaching of the Apostles. They never spoke as dictators, but only as counsellors. St. Peter says: "Neither as being lords over God's heritage." And St. Paul marks still more strongly the difference between the dictatorial authority of the priest and the gentle helpfulness of the minister: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."

The Church of Rome practises a different system. There are two offices in that Church, director and confessor. It is the duty of the confessor to deal with guilt, to administer punishment and absolution; and it is the duty of the direct-

or to deal with action, to solve cases of difficulty, to prescribe duties, and to arrange the course of life. Rome has reduced this to a system, and a mighty system it is. For when the confessor and director have done their work, the man is wholly, will and conscience, bound over to the obedience of the Church. This is the righteousness at which Rome aims, to abrogate the individual will and conscience, and substitute the will and conscience of the Church. But remember, I select Rome simply because Rome has reduced it to a *system*. Do not think it is confined to Rome; it belongs to human nature. There is not a minister or priest who is not exposed to the temptation which allures men to this practice, to try to be a confessor and director to his people, to guide their conscience, to rule their wills, and to direct their charities.

But observe how entirely alien this was from St. Paul's spirit. He of all men, the apostle of liberty, *could* not have desired to bind men even to himself in subjection. He hated slavery: most of all, the slavery of mind and conscience; nay, he consoled the slave, because he was free in heart to Christ (1 Cor. vii. 21, 22).

According to the apostle, then, a Christian was one who, perceiving principles in the free spirit of Jesus Christ, applied these principles for himself. As examples of this, remember the spirit in which he excommunicated (1 Cor. v. 12, 13) and absolved (2 Cor. ii. 10): and remark, in both these cases—where the priestly power would have been put forward, if anywhere—the entire absence of all aim at personal influence or authority. St. Paul would not even *command* Philemon to receive his slave (Philemon 8, 9, 13, 14). And in the case before us he would not *order* the Corinthians to give, even to a charity which he reckoned an important one. He would never have been pleased to have had the naming of all their charities and the marking out of all their acts. He wanted them to be men, and not dumb, driven cattle. That pliable, docile, slavish mind, which the priest loves and praises, the Apostle Paul would neither have praised nor loved.

II. Observe the spirit in which St. Paul appeals to the example of Christ (ver. 9). He urges the Corinthians to be liberal by the pattern of Christ. He places Him before them for imitation; but observe in what spirit he does it:

1. Remark the tendency in the mind of St. Paul to refer every thing back to Christ. Even when you least expect it, when there seems no similarity, he finds a precedent for

every duty in some sentence or some act of Christ. For example, when the apostle delivered his last charge to the weeping Church of Ephesus, he urged on them the duty of supporting the weak by loving labor, and enforced it thus: "I have showed you all things. How that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." So in the case before us he is urging on the Church of Corinth to contribute money; and at once he recurs back to the example of Christ: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."

To a Christian mind Christ is all; the measure of all things: the standard and the reference. All things centre in Him. The life and death of Christ got by heart, not by rote, must be the rule for every act.

2. Remark, again, that St. Paul finds the parallel of Christian liberality, not in the literal acts, but in the Spirit of Christ. The liberality asked from the Corinthians was the giving of money; the liberality of Christ was the giving of Himself. Literally, there was no resemblance: but the spirit of both acts was the same: sacrifice was the law of both. In the act of giving money out of penury, the eagle eye of St. Paul discerns the same root principle—the spirit of the Cross—which was the essence of the Redeemer's sacrifice.

This is the true use of the life of Christ; it is the *spirit* of that life to which we should attain. It is not by saying Christ's words or by doing Christ's acts, but it is by breathing His spirit that we become like Him. For "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Let us observe the feeling with which St. Paul regarded Jesus, as we find it expressed in the 9th verse of this chapter. We can not but remark how incompatible it is with the Socinian view of Christ's person. The doctrine taught by Socinianism was, that Christ was a mere man. The early followers of this creed held this doctrine on the authority of Scripture. They said that the apostles never taught that he was more than man; and they explained away all the passages in which the apostles seemed to hint at the reverse. But here is a passage which defies misconstruction: "Though He *was* rich, yet for your sakes he became poor." When was Christ rich? Here on earth, never: He whose cradle was a manger, and for whom the rich provided a grave! There can be but one interpretation of the text. Christ was

rich in that glory which He had with His Father before the world.

There can be no mistake about what St. Paul thought. We hold this passage to be decisive as to St. Paul's feeling. Nor can you say that this belief in Christ's Divinity was a dogma separable from St. Paul's Christianity; this belief *was* his Christianity. For the difference between what he was from the hour when he saw his Master in the sky, and what he had previously been, was exactly measured by the difference between the feeling with which he regarded Jesus when he considered Him as an impostor to be crushed, and the feeling in which he devoted all the energies of his glorious nature to Him as his Lord and his God, whom to serve he felt was alone blessedness.

3. Again, in St. Paul's spirit of entreaty, we remark the desire of reciprocity (vs. 13, 14, 15). It might have been supposed that because St. Paul was a Jew, he was therefore anxious for his Jewish brethren; and that in urging the Corinthians to give liberally, even out of their poverty, he forgot the unfairness of the request, and was satisfied so long as only the Jews were relieved—it mattered not at whose expense. But, in answer to such a supposed reproach, the apostle says, "I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened"—but I desire an *equality*, I ask that the rich may equalize his possessions with the poor. This is *now* a remarkable expression, because it is the watch-word of Socialists. They cry out for equality in circumstances; and the apostle says, "Let there be equality of circumstances." It is worth while to think of this.

The principle laid down is, that the abundance of the rich is intended for the supply of the poor; and the illustration of the principle is drawn from a miracle in the wilderness: "As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over: and he that had gathered little had no lack." Here then, in the wilderness, by a miraculous arrangement, if any one through greediness gathered more manna than enough, it bred worms, and became offensive; and if through weakness, or deep sorrow, or pain, any were prevented from collecting enough, still what they had collected was found to be sufficient.

In this miracle St. Paul perceives a great universal principle of human life. God has given to every man a certain capacity and a certain power of enjoyment. Beyond that he can not find delight. Whatsoever he heaps or hoards beyond that is not enjoyment but disquiet. For example: If a man monopolizes to himself rest which should be shared by



others, the result is unrest—the weariness of one on whom time hangs heavily. Again, if a man piles up wealth, all beyond a certain point becomes disquiet. Thus thought St. James: “Your gold and silver is cankered.” You can not escape the stringency of that law; he that gathereth much hath nothing over. How strangely true is that old miracle! How well life teaches us that whatever is beyond enough breeds worms, and becomes offensive!

We can now understand why the apostle desired equality, and what that equality was which he desired. Equality with him meant reciprocation—the feeling of a true and loving brotherhood; which makes each man feel, “My superabundance is not mine: it is another’s: not to be taken by force, or wrung from me by law, but to be *given* freely by the law of love.”

Observe, then, how Christianity would soon solve all questions. Take as instances: What are the rights of the poor? What are the duties of the rich? After how much does possession become superabundance? When has a man gathered too much? You can not answer these questions by any science. Socialism can not do it. Revolutions will try to do it, but they will only take from the rich and give to the poor; so that the poor become rich, and the rich poor, and we have inequality back again. But give us the Spirit of Christ. Let us all become Christians. Let us love as Christ loved. Give us the spirit of sacrifice which the early Church had, when no man said that aught of the things he possessed was his own; then each man’s own heart will decide what is meant by gathering too much, and what is meant by Christian equality.

We shall answer all such questions when we comprehend the principle of this appeal: “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.”

## LECTURE LV.

2 CORINTHIANS viii. 16-24; ix. 1-15. *March 6, 1853.*

THE ninth chapter continues the subject of the collection for the poor Christians in Jerusalem, and with it we shall expound the close of the eighth chapter, which we left unfinished in our last lecture. We take three points for consideration:

- I. The mode of collecting the contribution.
- II. The measure of the amount.
- III. The measure of the reward.

I. Mode of collection. St. Paul intrusted this task to three messengers: to Titus, who was himself eager to go; to a Christian brother whom the churches had selected as their almoner; and to another, whose zeal had been tested frequently by St. Paul himself.

The reasons for sending these messengers are given in an apologetic explanation. The first was, to give the Corinthians time, in order that the appeal might not come at an inconvenient moment: "I have sent the brethren," writes St. Paul, "lest our boasting of you should be in vain on this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready." Observe the tender wisdom of this proceeding. Every one knows how different is the feeling with which we give when charity is beforehand, from that with which we give when charitable collections come side by side with debts and taxes. The charity which finds us unprepared is a call as hateful as that of any creditor whom it is hard to pay. St. Paul knew this well—he knew that if the Corinthians were taken unawares, their feelings would be exasperated towards him with shame, and also towards the saints at Jerusalem, to whom they were constrained to give. Therefore he gave timely notice.

Again, he had sent to tell them of the coming of these messengers, in order to preserve their reputation for charity. For if the Corinthians were not ready, their inability to pay would be exhibited before the Macedonian Church and before the messengers; and from this St. Paul wished to save them.

Observe here two points: First, the just value which the apostle set on Christian reputation. For the inability of the Corinthians to meet the demands made on them would be like insolvency in mercantile phrase, and would damage their character. We all know how insolvency damages the *man*, how he feels humbled by it in his own sight, and "ashamed" before men. Such a man dare not look the collector or the creditor in the face; or, if he dare, it is through effrontery contracted by a habit which is hardened against shame; or, there are mean subterfuges which accustom the mind to the deceit it once hated; or, if there be none of these, or the man be too true or haughty to bend to such things, there are other sights and thoughts which tear a proud heart to pieces. In any way, the man is injured by insolvency.

Secondly: observe the delicacy of the mode in which the hint is given: "We (that we say not, ye) may not be ashamed." St. Paul makes it a matter of personal anxiety, as if the shame and fault of non-payment would be his. In this there was no subtle policy; there was no attempt to get at their purses by their weak side. St. Paul was above such means. It was natural, instinctive, real delicacy; and yet it was the surest way of obtaining what he wished, and that which the deepest knowledge of the human heart would have counselled. For thereby he appealed not to their selfish, but to their most unselfish feelings: he appealed to their gratitude, their generosity, to every thing which was noble or high within them. The Corinthians would feel—We can bear the shame of delinquency ourselves, but we can not bear that Paul should be disgraced.

This is a great principle—one of the deepest you can have for life and action. Appeal to the highest motives; appeal whether they be there or no, for you make them where you do not find them. Arnold trusted his boys, avowing that he believed what they affirmed, and all attempt at deceiving him ceased forthwith. When Christ appealed to the love in the heart of the sinful woman, that love broke forth pure again. She loved, and He trusted that affection, and the lost one was saved. Let men say what they will of human nature's evil, a generous, real, *unaffected* confidence never fails to elicit the Divine spark.

Thirdly: it was in order to preserve his own reputation that St. Paul shielded himself from censure by consulting appearances, for if so large a sum had been intrusted to him alone, an opening would have been left for the suspicion of appropriating a portion to himself. Therefore, in the 20th and 21st verses, he especially "avoids" this imputation by saying "that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." In this is to be observed St. Paul's wisdom, not only as a man of the world, but as a man of God. He knew that he lived in a censorious age, that he was as a city set on a hill, that the world would scan his every act and his every word, and attribute all conceivable and even inconceivable evil to what he did in all honor.

Now it was just because of St. Paul's honor and innocence that he was likely to have omitted this prudence. Just because the bare conception of malversation of the funds was impossible to him, we might have expected him to forget that the world would not think it equally impossible. For

to the pure all things are pure, to the honest and the innocent suspicion seems impossible. It was just because St. Paul felt no evil himself, that he might have thoughtlessly placéd himself in an equivocal position.

It is to such—men guileless of heart, innocent of even the thought of dishonesty, children in the way of the world—that Christ says, “Be ye wise as serpents.” Consider how defenseless St. Paul would have been had the accusation been made! Who was to *prove* that the charge of peculation was false? The defense would rest on St. Paul alone. Moreover, though he were to be acquitted as free from guilt, a charge refuted is not as if a charge had never been made. The man once accused goes forth into society never the same as before; he keeps his position, he practises his profession, his friends know him to be true and honest; but, for years after, the oblivious world, remembering only the accusation, and forgetting the fullness of the refutation, asks, “But were there not some suspicious circumstances?”

It is difficult to be forever cautious, to be always thinking about appearances; it may be carried too far—to a servility for the opinions of men: but in all cases like this of St. Paul, a wise prudence is necessary. Experience teaches this by bitter lessons as life goes on. No innocence will shield, no honor, nor integrity bright as the sun itself, will keep off altogether the biting breath of calumny. Charity *thinketh* no evil, but charity is rare: and to the world the honor of an Apostle Paul is not above suspicion. Therefore it is that he says: “Let not your good be evil spoken of.” Therefore it is that he, avoiding the possibility of this, sent messengers to collect the money, “providing for things honest in the sight of all men.”

II. The measure of the amount. The apostle did not name a sum to the Corinthians; he would not be lord over their desires or their reluctance; but he gave them a measure according to which he exhorted them to contribute.

First, then, he counselled them to be liberal: “As a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.” Secondly, he asked them to give deliberately: “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart.” Thirdly, the apostle exhorted the Corinthians to bestow cheerfully: “Not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth the cheerful giver.”

It was one aim of St. Paul, in sending beforehand to the Corinthians, that they might be able to give largely, not stintingly or avariciously. Here we may observe that the apostle did not speak, as we often preach—in an impassion-

ed manner, in order to get a large collection of money—trying by rhetoric and popular arts, by appeals to feeling and to personal influence, to gain his end. No; he left the amount to themselves. Yet he plainly told them that a *large* contribution was what God asked. Remember that the solemnity of this appeal has no parallel now: it was almost a solitary appeal. But now—now, when charities abound, to speak with the same vehemence on every occasion, to invoke the name of God, as if to withhold from this and that charity were guilt, is to misapply St. Paul's precedent. In the multitudinous charities for which you are solicited, remember one thing only—give liberally *somewhere*, in God's name, and to God's cause. But the cases must depend on yourselves, and should be conscientiously adopted.

The second measure of the amount was that it should be *deliberate*: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart."

Let us distinguish this deliberate charity from giving through mere impulse. Christian charity is a calm, wise thing; nay, sometimes, it will appear to a superficial observer a very hard thing—for it has courage to *refuse*. A Christian man will not give to every thing; he will not give because it is the fashion; he will not give because an appeal is very impassioned, or because it touches his sensibilities. He gives as he "*purposeth* in his heart." Here I remark, again, that often the truest charity is not giving, but employing. To give indiscriminately now often ruins by producing improvidence. In the days of the apostle things were different. The Jew who became a Christian lost all employment.

Remember, too, with respect to charitable collections, that charity should be deliberate. Men often come determined beforehand to give according to the eloquence of the appeal, not according to a calm resolve, and from a sense of a debt of love to God, which rejoices in giving. I do not say that a man is never to give more than he meant, when touched by the speaker; because generally men mean to give too little. But I say that it is an unhealthy state of things when a congregation leave their charity dependent on their ministerial sympathies. Let men take their responsibilities upon themselves. It is not a clergyman's business to think for his congregation, but to help them to judge for themselves. Hence, let Christian men dare to refuse as well as dare to give. A congregational collection should not be obtained by that mere force of eloquence which excites the sensibilities, and awakens a sudden and short-lived impulse of giving, but it

should rather be to them an opportunity to be complied with "as every man purposeth in his heart."

III. The measure of the reward. The measure of all spiritual rewards is exactly proportioned to the acts done. The law of the spiritual harvest is twofold: 1. A proportion in reference to quantity: 2. A proportion in reference to kind.

1. In reference to quantity: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly." Hence may be inferred the principle of degrees of glory hereafter. In the Parable of the Talents, each multiplier of his money received a reward exactly in proportion to the amount he had gained; and each, of course, was rewarded differently. Again: "He that receiveth a *prophet* in the name of a prophet"—that is, because he was a prophet—"shall receive a *prophet's* reward; and he that receiveth a *righteous* man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a *righteous* man's reward." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament"—that is their reward; "and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever"—a reward different from the former. The right hand and left of Christ in His kingdom are given only to those who drink of His cup and are baptized with His baptism.

Thus there is a peculiar and appropriate reward for every act; only remember, that the reward is not given for the merit of the act, but follows on it as inevitably in the spiritual kingdom, as wheat springs from its grain, and barley from its grain, in the natural world. Because this law of reward exists, we are given encouragements to labor: "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Again: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

2. In reference to kind. The reward of an act of charity is kindred with the act itself. But St. Paul lays down the broad law: "Whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap." He reaps, therefore, not something else, but that very thing which he sows. So in the world of nature, a harvest of wheat comes not from sown barley, nor do oak forests arise from beech mast, but each springs from its own kind; the "herb yielding seed after his kind; and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind." Thus also is it in the spiritual world. He that soweth to the flesh shall not reap of the spirit, nor shall he who soweth to the spirit reap of the flesh.

Now here often a strange fallacy arises. Men sow their carnal things—give their money, for example—to God; and because they have *apparently* sown carnal things to God, they expect to reap the same. For instance, in pagan times, fishermen or farmers sacrificed their respective properties, and expected a double fishery or harvest in return. The same pagan principle has come down to us. Some persons give to a Jews' conversion society, or to a church missionary society, and confidently hope for a blessing on their worldly affairs as a result. They are liberal to the poor, "lending to the Lord," in order that He may repay them with success in business or an advance in trade.

The fallacy lies in this: the thing sown was *not* money, but spirit. It only *seemed* money, it was in reality the feeling with which it was given which was sown. For example, the poor widow gave two mites, but God took account of *sacrifice*. The sinful woman gave an alabaster-box of ointment, valued by a miserable economist at three hundred pence. God valued it as so much love. Both these sowed not what they gave, but spiritual seed: one love, the other sacrifice. Now God is not going to pay these things in coin of this earth: He will not recompense sacrifice with success in business, nor love with a legacy or a windfall. He will repay them with spiritual coin *in kind*.

In the particular instance now before us, what are the rewards of liberality which St. Paul promises to the Corinthians? They are, first, the love of God (ver. 7); secondly, a spirit abounding to every good work (ver. 8); thirdly, thanksgiving on their behalf (vs. 11, 12, 13). A noble harvest! but *all* spiritual. Comprehend the meaning of it well. Give, and you will not get back again. Do not expect your money to be returned, like that of Joseph's brethren in their sacks' mouths. When you give to God, sacrifice, and know that what you give *is* sacrificed, and is not to be got again, even in this world; for if you give, expecting it back again, there is no sacrifice: charity is no speculation in the spiritual funds, no wise investment, to be repaid with interest either in time or eternity!

No! the rewards are these: do right, and God's recompense to you will be the power of doing more right. Give, and God's reward to you will be the spirit of giving more; a blessed spirit, for it is the Spirit of God Himself, whose life is the blessedness of giving. Love, and God will pay you with the capacity of more love; for love is Heaven—love is God within you.

## LECTURE LVI.

2 CORINTHIANS x. 1-18. *March 20, 1853.*

THE Second Epistle has until now been addressed to those in Corinth who felt either love or admiration for St. Paul, certainly to those who owned his authority. But with the tenth chapter there begins a new division of the Epistle. Henceforth we have St. Paul's reply to his enemies at Corinth, and his vindication is partly official and partly personal. They denied his apostolic authority and mission, declared that he had not been appointed by Christ, and endeavored to destroy his personal influence in the Church by sneers at his bodily weakness, his inconsistency, and his faithlessness to his promise of coming to Corinth, which they imputed to a fear of his own weakness of character. Powerful enough in letter-writing, said they, but when he comes, his presence, his speech, are weak and contemptible. To these charges St. Paul answers in the remaining chapters. We will consider two subjects:

I. The impugners of his authority.

II. His vindication.

I. The impugners of his authority. It is necessary to distinguish these into two classes, the deceivers and the deceived; else we can not understand the difference of tone, sometimes meek, and sometimes stern, which pervades the apostle's vindication. For example, compare the second verse of this chapter with the first, and you will remark the different shades of feeling under which each was written. This change of tone he himself acknowledges in the fifth chapter of this Epistle: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause." His enemies had become embittered against him through the deference paid to him by the rest of the Church. Hence they tried to make him suspected. They charged him with insincerity (2 Cor. i. 12, 13, 18, 19). They said he was ever promising to come, yet never meaning to do so; and that he was only powerful in writing (2 Cor. x. 10). They accused him of mercenary motives, of a lack of apostolic gifts, and of not preaching the Gospel. They charged him



with artifice. His Christian prudence and charity were regarded as devices whereby he allured and deceived his followers. We must also bear in mind that the apostle had to deal with a strong party spirit in Corinth: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1 Cor. i. 12).

We are informed in this chapter, that of all these parties his chief difficulty lay with that party which called itself Christ's. This was not the school inclined to ritual, which followed St. Peter, nor the Pauline party, which set its face against all Jewish practices and drove liberty into license; nor yet that party which had perhaps a disposition to rationalize and followed Apollos, who, having been brought up at Alexandria, had most probably spent his youth in the study of literature and philosophy. But it was a party who, throwing off all authority, even though it was apostolic, declared that they received Christ alone as their Head, and that He alone should communicate truth directly to them.

First, then, let us observe, that though these persons called themselves Christ's, they are nevertheless blamed in the same list with others. And yet what could seem to be more right than for men to say, "We will bear no name but Christ's; we throw ourselves on Christ's own words—on the Bible; we throw aside all intellectual philosophy: we will have no servitude to ritualism?" Nevertheless, these persons were just as bigoted and as blamable as the others. They were not wrong in calling themselves Christ's; but they were wrong in naming themselves so *distinctively*. It is plain that, by assuming this name, they implied that they had a right to it more than others had. They did not mean to say only, "We are Christ's," but also, "You are *not* Christ's." God was not, in their phraseology, *our* Father, but rather the Father of our *party*; the Father of us only who are the elect. In their mouths that Name became no longer comprehensive, but exclusive. Thus St. Paul blamed all who, instead of rejoicing that they were Christians, prided themselves on being a particular kind of Christians. The great doctrine of one baptism was to teach the feeling of Christian brotherhood. All were Christ's: all belonged to him: no one sect was His exclusively, or dared to claim Him as their Head more than another.

This is a feeling which is as much to be avoided now as it was in the time of the apostle. We split ourselves into sects, each of which asserts its own peculiar Christianity. This sectarianism falsifies the very *principle* of our religion, and therefore falsifies its forms. It falsifies the Lord's Prayer.

It substitutes for "*our* Father," the Father of *me*, of *my* church or party. It falsifies the creed: "I believe in Jesus Christ *our* Lord." It falsifies both the sacraments. No matter how large, or true, or beautiful the name by which we call ourselves, we are forever tending to the sectarian spirit when we assume some appellation which cuts others off from participation with us; when we call ourselves, for example, Bible Christians, Evangelicals, Churchmen—as if no one but ourselves deserved the name.

Secondly, let us observe that, however Christian this expression may sound, "We will take Christ for our teacher, and not His Apostles or His Church," the spirit which prompts it is wrong. This Christ-party among the Corinthians depreciated the Church, in order to exalt the Lord of the Church; but they did so wrongly, and at the peril of their religious life. For God's order is the historical; and these men separated themselves from God's order when they claimed an arbitrary distinction for themselves, and rejected the teaching of St. Paul and the Apostles, to whom the development of Christ's doctrine had been intrusted. For the phase of truth presented by St. Paul was just as necessary as that prominently taught by Christ. Not that Christ did not teach all truth, but that the hidden meaning of His teaching was developed still further by the inspired Apostles.

We can not, at this time, cut ourselves off from the teaching of eighteen centuries, and say, "We will have none but Christ to reign over us;" nor can we proclaim, "Not the Church, but the Lord of the Church." We can not do without the different shades and phases of knowledge which God's various instruments, in accordance with their various characters and endowments, have delivered to us. For God's system is mediatorial—that is, truth communicated to men through men.

See, then, how, as in Corinth, the very attempt to separate from parties may lead to a sectarian spirit, unless we can learn to see good in all, and Christ in all. And should we, as this Christ-party did, desert human instrumentality, to sink into self-will; we cut ourselves from the Church of God, and fall under the popery of our own infallibility?

What dangers on every side! God shield us! For these present days are like those of which we are speaking. The same tendencies are appearing again: some are disposed to unduly value law and ritual, some aspire to a freedom from all law, some incline to a merely literary religion, and some, like the Christ-party here spoken of, to pietism and subjective Christianity. Hence it is that the thoughtful study of these

Epistles to the Corinthians is so valuable in our time, when nothing will avert the dangers which threaten us but the principles which St. Paul drew from the teaching of Christ, and which he has laid down here for the admonition of the Church at Corinth.

II. His vindication. St. Paul vindicated his authority, because it was founded on the power of *meekness*, and it was a spiritual power in respect of that meekness. The weapons of his warfare were not carnal: "Though we walk in the flesh," he says, "we do not war after the flesh"—that is, We do not use a worldly soldier's weapons—we contend, not with force, but with meekness of wisdom and with the persuasiveness of truth. This was one of the root principles of St. Paul's ministry: if he reproved, it was done in the spirit of meekness (Gal. v. 1); or if he defended his own authority, it was still with the same spirit (2 Cor. x. 1). Again, when the time of his departure was at hand, and he would leave his last instructions to his son Timothy, he closes his summary of the character of ministerial work by showing the need of a gentle spirit: "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."

Here, again, according to his custom, the apostle refers to the example of Christ. He besought the Corinthians "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." He vindicated his authority, because he had been meek, as Christ was meek; for not by menace, nor by force, did He conquer, but by the might of gentleness and the power of love: "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." On that foundation St. Paul built; it was that example which he imitated in his moments of trial, when he was reproved and censured. He confessed his own "baseness of appearance;" if others had low thoughts of him, he had low thoughts of himself.

Thus it happened that one of the apostle's "mightiest weapons" was the meekness and lowliness of heart which he drew from the life of Christ. So it ever is: humility, after all, is the best defense. It disarms and conquers by the majesty of submission. To be humble and loving—that is true life. Do not let insult harden you, nor cruelty rob you of tenderness. If men wound your heart, let them not embitter it; and then yours will be the victory of the Cross. You will conquer as Christ conquered, and bless as He blessed. But remember, fine *words* about gentleness, self-sacrifice,

meekness, are worth very little. Talking of the nobleness of humility and self-surrender is not believing in them. Would you believe in the Cross and its victory? then live in its spirit—act upon it.

Again, St. Paul rested his authority not on carnal weapons, but on the spiritual power of truth. Consider the strongholds which the apostle had to pull down and subdue. There were the sophistries of the educated, and the ignorant prejudices of the multitude. There were the old habits which still clung to the christianized heathen. There was the pride of intellect in the arrogant Greek philosophers, and the pride of the flesh in the Jewish love of signs. There was—most difficult of all—the pride of ignorance. All these strongholds were to be conquered: every thought was to be brought “into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

For this work St. Paul’s sole weapon was truth. The ground on which he taught was not authority: but “by manifestation of the truth” he commended himself to “every man’s conscience.” His power rested on no carnal weapon, on no craft or personal influence; but it rested on the strong foundation of the truth he taught. He felt that truth must prevail. So neither by force did St. Paul’s authority stand, nor on his inspired apostleship, but simply by the persuasive power of truth. The truth he spoke would at last vindicate his teaching and his life: and he calmly trusted himself to God and time. A grand, silent lesson for us now! when the noises of a hundred controversies stun the Church; when we are trying to force our own tenets on our neighbors, and denouncing those who differ from us, foolishly thinking within ourselves that the wrath of man will work the righteousness of God.

Rather, Christian men, let us teach as Christ and His apostles taught. *Force* no one to God; menace no one into religion: but convince all by the might of truth. Should any of you have to bear attacks on your character, or life, or doctrine, defend yourself with meekness: and if defense should but make matters worse—and when accusations are vague, as is the case but too often—why, then, commit yourself fully to the truth. Outpray—outpreach—outlive the calumny!

## LECTURE LVII.

2 CORINTHIANS xi. 1-33. *First Sunday after Easter, Afternoon,*  
*April 3, 1853.*

THE two chapters that will now come before us in our regular exposition of this Epistle are of a very peculiar character. They are entirely occupied with the boastings of an inspired apostle; in the previous chapters we find him refuting separately each charge that had been brought against him—of being untrue, mean, changeable, and insincere, till at last, as if stung to the quick and worn out at their ingratitude, he pours out, unreservedly, his own praises in self-vindication. We can only call this by one name, and that one (what St. Paul himself calls it) “boasting.” He says, it is “folly,” “glorying,” “not after the Lord,” and yet although all this, he yet says, that “he is not ashamed in the same confident boasting.” At first this seems strange, but a little thought will make this plain, when we understand fully the meaning of the expression, “not *after* the Lord.” There are many things which are not exactly *after* Christ, and yet are not *contrary* to the Spirit of Christ. We can not say that resentment or indignation are *after* Christ, because Christ was essentially meek and humble, and Christianity is meekness, joy, peace, long-suffering, and gentleness. Yet they may be any thing but contradictory to the Christian spirit under some circumstances, for there are occasions when if a man did not feel resentment and indignation, hardly could he be a man. So to defend ourselves from the blow of an assassin by another blow can not be said to be *after* Christ, yet is self-defense not only permissible but a duty. Warfare can not be said to be *after* Christ, for in Christ’s kingdom even the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and the law is—Return good for evil; but an earthly kingdom would lose its very existence if, as *things are*, it were to refuse to defend itself by war. All self-vindication, against even false accusations, is painful; not *after* Christian modesty, yet it may be pardonable, nay in some circumstances, it is absolutely a duty. This is the subject which will occupy us this afternoon, and our thoughts will run in two lines:

I. The excuses St. Paul offered for this mode of vindication.

And, first, we must notice that it was not merely for his own sake, but for the sake of others. "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Clearly this was a valid excuse; for if this charge were unanswered, and thereby his influence would have been undermined, and that of false teachers established, then to refuse to vindicate himself would not have been true but false modesty. But we must here make two remarks on two *words* that occur in the text we have just read.

First: we must notice the word "jealousy." St. Paul rightly and wisely used it, for, rightly speaking and not carried to too great an extent, it is but the necessary manifestation of love, no true affection can exist without it. But this jealousy of which St. Paul speaks was very peculiar; it was not envy that other teachers were followed in Corinth, not anxiety that others should not have more influence than he had, but it was lest those who might not deserve it should have this influence, and might lead the disciples astray. He was jealous for Christ's sake, not his own. It was a godly jealousy. He wrote this defense to preserve the faithfulness of the Corinthian converts.

Let us pause one moment to consider what it was that he feared. That they should be corrupted from the *simplicity* of the Gospel. This is an expression constantly mistaken. People suppose simplicity means what a child or a ploughman can understand. Now if this be simplicity, evidently the simplicity of the Gospel was corrupted by St. Paul himself, for he is not simple. Who understands his deep writings? Does one in a thousand? St. Peter says there are things hard to be understood in St. Paul's Epistles. We often hear it alleged as a charge against a book, a lecture, or a sermon, that it is not simple. If we are told that what we are to preach must be on a level with the most inferior intellect, so that without attention or thought it may be plain to all, we are bound to disclaim any obligation to do this; if it is supposed that the mysteries of God of which we are the stewards, can be made as easy of comprehension as an article in a newspaper, or a novel, we say that such simplicity can only be attained by shallowness. There must be earnestness, candor, patience, and a certain degree of intelligence as well as

a sort of sympathy between the minds of the preacher and his hearers, and there must be a determination to believe that no man who endeavors to preach the Gospel will deliberately and expressly say what he knows to be false or wrong. "Simple" means, according to St. Paul, unmixed, or unadulterated.

We have an example in the Epistle to the Galatians, where he speaks against those Judaizers who said, "Except ye be circumcised, ye can not be saved:" they did not deny the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin, but they added to it: they said something was to be mixed with the doctrine of the Cross. These corrupted the *simplicity* of the Gospel. So now if a man, whether he be lay or clerical, says that Christ will save any who come to Him, provided only they be baptized and have received the Lord's Supper and absolution from one who has been properly and apostolically ordained, he does not *deny* Christ; he only *mixes* the truth and adds to it, and thus corrupts the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. In these cases it is not Christ simply—that is, as the Eternal Word manifested to the soul—but something additional which is taught as necessary to salvation. What St. Paul charged the Corinthians with was this, that they had added Judaic ceremonies to the pure Gospel of salvation by Christ alone.

Secondly: It was necessary to vindicate the character of St. Paul. Character is an exceedingly delicate thing, that of a Christian man especially so. To a certain extent it is true, no doubt, that we must not be over-anxious as to the estimation in which we are held by others—it is true, no doubt, to a certain extent, that the character which can not defend itself is not worth defending, and that it is better to live down evil reports. But if a character is never defended, it comes to be considered as incapable of defense, and besides we know that often many years are required to clear away suspicions, and then the vindication often comes too late for the maligned man.

Lately antiquarians have dived deep into historic records, and have made discoveries which have established the purity of certain characters over which slurs have been cast for centuries. But although it is made clear to *us*, it is too late for *them*. Besides, allowing an uncontradicted slander to rest upon us, may perhaps greatly injure our influence with others. And therefore St. Paul says boldly, "I am not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles." Some can not understand the feeling which would prompt such an expression as this. Shallow men would call it egotism, vanity, folly, as if

egotism consisted only in speaking of one's self; as if when the personal pronoun was omitted the egotism ceased; as if it were vanity in St. Paul to assert the fact of his innocence, when his whole life was one long martyrdom for Christ. True Christian modesty is not the being ignorant of what we are, neither does it consist in affecting ignorance. If a man has genius, he knows he has it; if a man is more powerful than others, he knows his strength. If a man is falsely charged with theft, there is no vanity in his indignantly asserting that he has been honest all his life-long. Christian modesty consists rather in this—in having set before us a sublime standard of what is high and great and pure and good, so that we feel how far we are from attaining to *that*. Thus we can understand him when he says, he is "not behind the chiefest of the apostles," while he yet says in another place that he is "the chief of sinners."

Foolish men can not comprehend this; they can not understand how a Christian man can simply and undisguisedly say what he knows to be true of himself, in reply to accusations—that his honor is unsullied, his chastity untainted, his truth indisputable; that though rude in speech he is not so in knowledge—and yet how the same man can go into the secret sanctuary of his closet before God, and alone with his Maker bow himself in deepest self-abasement, and cry, "Unclean, unclean." That was the mistake Job's wise friends made. Job vindicated his own innocence, and bade them observe how the city was filled with his praises, and how when the eye saw him, it blessed him; and his friends charged him with boasting and justifying himself when he replied thus indignantly to their suspicions. To them this was a proof of his self-righteousness; they could not see how that *relatively* to man he was righteous, yet that *absolutely*, before God, his feeling was, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

If we have found out this afternoon in what true Christian modesty consists, we shall not have studied these verses in vain. It is not ignorance, it is not blindness, it is not affectation. It is not in hiding from ourselves what we are, nor in hiding from others what we know ourselves to be, but in placing before us ever the sublime, unapproachable standard of Christ. Let a man once feel the beauty and holiness of *that* life, and he will feel that there is no room for vanity, for he will feel how small, how guilty, how erring, and how ignorant he is. If we want to know the language of true modesty, here is an example of it: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if



that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." "Brethren" (he goes on to say), "I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Surely this can not be vanity.

II. We must now notice the points of which St. Paul boasted.

First: that he had preached the essentials of the Gospel. "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another Gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." In other words, he had been a true minister, his matter had been true, whatever fault they might have found with his manner. And the men of Corinth thought that they had found much to blame in his manner. Some said he spoke the Greek tongue badly, as a foreigner; others said he had none of those graces of oratory that Apollos had, that he had not been a personal disciple of Christ, as St. Peter had. St. Paul told them that, better far than grace of language or eloquence, or mere adventitious outward circumstances, was the fact, that the truth he had preached was the essential truth of the Gospel: and this truth he gives in a very few words, as Christ and Christ's Spirit. The central object of Christianity is Christ, not merely His Cross; Christ the risen and the crucified; Christ held not merely according to a set of doctrines and dogmas, but *in* the heart and life, the Spirit of the Cross and of the Resurrection: the Spirit of the Cross sundering the heart, no matter how painfully, year by year, from the evil and devilry within us; the Spirit of the Resurrection raising us to all things high and pure and noble, leaving in the grave behind us all despondency, sadness, gloom, and sin, and raising us up, as on angels' wings, to contemplate, and gradually to have formed within us, the purity of Him who sitteth on the right hand of God.

Secondly: He boasts of his disinterestedness. "Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the Gospel of Christ *freely*?" We must remember that St. Paul had a right to be maintained by the Church, not only because he was an apostle, but, as he had shown them, because it is a great law of God's universe, belonging equally to an ox or to a man, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." And he had taken sustenance from

other churches, from that of Macedonia, for instance, but he would not take any thing from the Corinthians, and this not from pride, nor because he loved them less, but because he desired not to leave one single point anywhere on which his enemies might hang an accusation.

There is something exquisitely touching in the delicacy of the raillery (if we may venture to call it so), with which he asked if he had committed an offense in so doing. He asked them whether they were ashamed of a man of toil and labor—nay, was not this the very spirit of Him who was not born among the sons of idleness, but among those of toil and want and labor? Here is great encouragement for those who labor; they have no need to be ashamed of their labor, for Christ Himself and His apostle toiled for their own support. I think that it is especially necessary to urge this consideration now—the time has come when this truth must be more fully exhibited; for I think great changes are approaching in our social economy; there is a continual drifting of population from our shores, and gradually the distinction between rich and poor is becoming less prominently marked; the time is coming when mere idleness and leisure will not be a ground for boasting any longer—when that truth will come out in its entirety, that it is the law of our humanity that all should work, whether with the brain or with the hands; and when it will be seen that he who does not or will not work, the sooner he is out of this work-a-day world of God's, the better.

Thirdly: St. Paul boasted of his sufferings; he enumerates them at too great length for me to touch upon all of them now, and we are all well acquainted with them, yet one or two we must notice. First, he boasted of that which he had from God—his extraction. "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I." Of his apostleship—"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more." Secondly, He tells of his stripes: in one verse he says that "of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one," and afterwards he says he was beaten with rods, thus proving that he was persecuted both by Jews and Gentiles: he was a Jew and was persecuted by the Gentiles, and afterwards when he preached the salvability of the Gentiles, he was persecuted by the Jews. Are we surprised at this? he himself says, "If I yet pleased men, how should I please God?" Then He mentions what he calls the most painful trial of all, the care of the churches: "Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the

churches." To his loving spirit, the dissensions, the quarrels of the converts were more hard to bear than any personal suffering. In this one sentence speaks the spirit of an apostle. It is remarkable that St. Paul does not glory in what he had done, but in what he had borne; he does not speak of his successes, of his converts, of the heresies he had subdued; but he speaks of the manifold trials which he had undergone for Christ. He had "filled up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake which is the Church." This marks all his conduct and sufferings as being in the spirit of the Cross, that it was for the sake of others.

Fourthly: he boasted of his sympathy. "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" If there was a stumbling-block cast in any one's way, St. Paul burned with indignation against the brother who had cast it, and with infinite tenderness and compassion for the brother who had been offended. This largeness of sympathy was a peculiar characteristic of St. Paul—this power of entering into the feelings of every heart as fully as if he himself had lived the life of that heart. To the Jew he became as a Jew, and endeavored to extract from the Jewish ceremonies the truth that lay beneath them all: and even when he went to Athens, he did not declaim against the idolatry of the citizens, but took his text from an inscription on one of their own altars, and preached the Gospel to them from that.

All these St. Paul uses as evidences of his apostolic ministry. The use of it to us is great, for it is high moral evidence of the truth of Christianity, and moral evidence is more cogent than any other. Our expositions lately may have seemed to some to have become almost entirely eulogiums on the Apostle Paul, and yet though they may have been so to a certain extent, it is impossible to have avoided it; for who can read these epistles and not feel his own heart kindled within him at the majesty, the boldness, and the love exhibited to us, in the narrative of what he did? It gives quite a thrill of delight to find that this earth has ever produced such a man as St. Paul, so loving and so tender, so exquisite in delicacy, so bold in denouncing sin, and so zealous for the truth and the glory of his Master, Christ.

There was no fanaticism in St. Paul's life; he was calm, sound, and wise. In St. Paul, whenever we find a question dealt with, it is answered so fully, treated so logically, that his adversary has no room left for further cavilling; if it is a question of casuistry, it is examined with the policy and wisdom of a statesman and the love of an apostle. His su-

perhuman devotion was directed by a sound, clear brain; with his whole heart and brain he lived in Christianity. He had not always been so; once he had been an unbeliever, and thought verily that by persecuting the Christians he did God a service; but as also to St. Thomas, the external as well as internal evidence had been given to him—and there was left him no alternative, but to cast all the powers of his sublime nature at the foot of the Cross of Christ; and if he believed, with an intellect so piercing, so clear, and so brilliant, he must indeed be a vain man who will venture any longer to doubt.

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### LECTURE LVIII.

2 CORINTHIANS xii. 1-4. *May 8, 1853.*

THE Apostle Paul, in the preceding chapter, had adduced evidence of the greatness of his sufferings in his witness to the truths he had received from Christ. The extent of his labors was proved by his sufferings, and both were, in a manner, an indirect proof of his apostleship. In the passage we consider to-day—a passage of acknowledged difficulty—he advances a direct proof of his apostolic mission. Let us, however, before proceeding, understand the general structure of the passage. The point in question all along has been St. Paul's authority. The Corinthians doubted it, and in proof of it he alleges, in these verses, certain spiritual communications of a preternatural kind which had been made to him. To these he adds, in the 12th verse, certain peculiar trials; all of which together made up his notion of apostolic experience. A man divinely gifted and divinely tried—that was an apostle. But it is remarkable that he reckons his trials as a greater proof of apostleship than his marvellous experiences (ver. 9).

There is, however, a difficulty to meet at the outset. It would seem that St. Paul, in reference to these revelations, is not speaking of himself, but of another man (vs. 1-5); more especially in the 5th verse: "Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." Nevertheless, the fact of St. Paul's identity with the person he speaks of is beyond a doubt. All difficulty is set at rest by the 6th and 7th verses, where he allows that the man so favored is himself, "lest I should be exalted above measure."

It remains, then, to ask how St. Paul came to speak of himself under the personality of another. For this I suggest

two reasons: 1. Natural diffidence. For the more refined and courteous a man is, the more he will avoid, in conversation, a direct mention of himself; and, in like manner, as civilization advances, the disinclination to write even of self in the first person is shown by the use of the terms "the author" and "we," men almost unconsciously acting in that spirit of delicacy which forbids too open an obtrusion of one's self upon the public.

That this delicacy was felt by St. Paul is evident from what he says in the fourth chapter of the First Epistle, in the 6th verse, and from the whole of that chapter, where he speaks of "laborers," "ministers," and of the Apostles generally, though all the while the particular person meant is himself. From this 12th chapter and from the 11th, it is evident all along that he has been forced to speak of self only by a kind of compulsion. Fact after fact of his own experiences is, as it were, wrung out, as if he had not intended to tell it. For there is something painful to a modest mind in the direct use of the personal pronoun "I," over which an humble spirit like the apostle's throws a veil.

2. The second reason I suggest for this suppression of the first person is, that St. Paul chose to recognize this higher experience as not yet entirely his true self. He speaks of a divided experience, of two selves, two Pauls: one Paul in the third heaven, enjoying the beatific vision: another yet on earth, struggling, tempted, tried, and buffeted by Satan. The former he chose rather to regard as the Paul that was to be. He dwelt on the latter as the actual Paul coming down to the prose of life to find his real self, lest he should be tempted to forget or mistake himself in the midst of the heavenly revelations.

Such a double nature is in us all. In all there is an Adam and a Christ—an ideal and a real. Numberless instances will occur to us in the daily experience of life; the fact is shown, for example, in the strange discrepancy so often seen between the writings of the poet or the sermons of the preacher, and their actual lives. And yet in this there is no necessary hypocrisy, for the one represents the man's *aspiration*, the other his attainment. In that very sentence, however, there may be a danger; for is it not dangerous to be satisfied with mere aspirations and fine sayings? The apostle felt it was; and therefore he chose to take the lowest—the actual self—and call that Paul, treating the highest as, for the time, another man. Hence in the 5th verse he says: "Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." Were the crawling caterpillar to

feel within himself the wings that are to be, and be haunted with instinctive forebodings of the time when he shall hover about flowers and meadows, and expatiate in heavenly air; yet, the wisdom of that caterpillar would be to remember his present business on the leaf, to feed on green herbs, and weave his web, lest, losing himself in dreams, he should never become a winged insect at all. In the same manner, it is our wisdom, lest we become all earthy, to remember that our visions shall be realized, but also it is our wisdom, lest we become mere dreamers, or spiritually "puffed up," to remember that the aspiring man within us is not yet our true self, but, as it were, another man—the "Christ within us, the hope of glory."

Our subject to-day, then, is "spiritual ecstasy."

I. The time when this vision took place—"fourteen years ago." The date is vague, "about fourteen years ago," and is irreconcilable with any exact point in our confused chronology of the life of St. Paul. Some have supposed that this vision was identical with that recorded (Acts ix.) at his conversion on his road to Damascus; but that this is evidently a different one is apparent:

First: because the words in that transaction were not "unlawful to utter." They are three times recorded in the Acts, with no reserve or reticence at all.

Secondly: because there was no doubt as to St. Paul's own locality in that vision. He has twice recorded his own experience of it in terms clear and unmistakable. His spirit did not even seem to him to be caught up. He saw, external to him above, a light, and heard a voice, himself all the while consciously living upon earth: nay, more, so far from being exalted, he was stricken to the ground. There may be doubt whether the actual words were addressed to his outward ears or to his inward spirit, but of his being in the body he could have no doubt. Here, however, the difficulty to the apostle's mind is not respecting the nature of the revelation, but how and where he was himself situated: "Whether in the body, or out of the body, I can not tell." He was not psychologist enough for that.

Thirdly: the vision which met him on the road to Damascus was of an humbling character: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" In that sorrow-giving question there was no ground for spiritual pride. On the other hand, in *this* case the vision was connected with a tendency to pride and vainglory. For, lest he should be puffed up "beyond measure," a messenger of Satan came to buffet him.

Evidently, the first appearance was at the outset of his Christian life; the other, in the fullness of his Christian experience, when, through deep sufferings and loss for Christ's sake, prophecies of rest and glory hereafter came to his soul to sustain and comfort him. And thus, in one of those moments of high hope, he breaks forth: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

II: This very circumstance, however, that it was *not* the vision which occurred to him near Damascus, reveals something more to us. By our proof to the contrary, we have reaped not merely a negative but a positive gain. If the vision here spoken of had been that at his conversion, it would have been alone in his experience. There could come no other like it afterwards. But if it was not that vision, then the ecstasy mentioned in this chapter did not stand alone in St. Paul's experience. It was not the first—no, nor the last. He had known of many such, for he speaks of the "abundance of the revelations" given to him (ver. 7). This marks out the man. Indeed, to comprehend the visions, we must comprehend the man. For God gives visions at His own will, and according to certain and fixed laws. He does not inspire every one. He does not reveal His mysteries to men of selfish, or hard, or phlegmatic temperaments. He gives preternatural communications to those whom He prepares beforehand by a peculiar spiritual sensitiveness. There are, physically, certain sensitivenesses to sound and color that qualify men to become gifted musicians and painters—so, spiritually, there are certain strong original susceptibilities (I say *original* as derived from God, the origin of all), and on these God bestows strange gifts and sights, deep feelings not to be uttered in human language, and immeasurable by the ordinary standard.

Such a man was St. Paul—a very wondrous nature—the Jewish nature in all its strength. We know that the Jewish temperament peculiarly fitted men to be the organs of a revelation. Its fervor, its moral sense, its veneration, its indomitable will, all adapted the highest sons of the nation for receiving hidden truths, and communicating them to others. Now all this was, in its fullness, in St. Paul. A heart, a brain, and a soul of fire: all his life a suppressed volcano; his acts "living things with hands and feet;" his words, "half battles." A man, consequently, of terrible inward conflicts: his soul a battle-field for heaven and hell. Read, for example, the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Ro-

mans, describing his struggle under the law. You will find there no dull metaphysics about the "bondage of the will," or the difference between conscience and will. It is all intensely personal. St. Paul himself descends into the argument, as if the experience he describes were present then! "O wretched man that I *am*! who shall deliver *me* from the body of this death?" So, too, in the 16th chapter of the Acts. He had no abstract perception of Macedonia's need of the Gospel. To his soul a *man* of Macedonia presents himself in the night, crying, "Come over, and help us." Again, we find in the 18th chapter of the Acts, that while the apostle was at Corinth, beset with trials, surrounded by the Jews thirsting for his blood, a message came in a vision, and "the Lord stood by him, and said to him, Speak, for I am with thee." Now I believe such a voice has spoken to us all, only we explained it away as the result of our own reasoning. St. Paul's life was with God; his very dreams were of God. A being stood beside him by day and night. He saw a form which others did not see, and heard a voice which others could not hear.

Again, compare the 27th chapter of the Acts, 23d verse; where we are told that when he was a prisoner, tossed for many nights upon the tempestuous sea, he saw the angel of that God, "Whose he was, and whom he served." Remember his noble faith, his unshaken conviction that all would be as the vision and the voice of God had told him. Ever you see him as breathing the air of another world. Even his trials and conflicts were those of a high order. Most of us are battling with some mean appetite or gross passion. St. Paul's battles were not those of the flesh and appetites, but of spirit struggling with spirit. I infer this partly from his own special gift of chastity, and partly from the case which he selects in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which is "covetousness"—an evil desire, but still one of the spirit.

Now to such men the other world is revealed as a reality which it can not appear to others. Those things in heaven and earth which philosophy does not dream of, these men see. But, doubtless, such things are seen under certain conditions. For example, many of St. Paul's visions were when he was "*fasting*," at times when the body is not predominant in our humanity. For "fullness of bread" and abundance of idleness are not the conditions in which we can see the things of God. Again, most of these revelations were made to him in the midst of *trial*. In the prison at Philippi, during the shipwreck, while "the thorn was in his flesh,"



then it was that the vision of unutterable things was granted to him, and the vision of God in His clearness came.

This was the experience of Christ Himself. God does not lavish His choicest gifts, but reserves them. Thus, at Christ's baptism, before beginning His work, the voice from Heaven was heard. It was in the temptation that the angels ministered to Him. On the Transfiguration Mount the glory shone when Moses and Elias spake to Him of His death, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. In perplexity which of two things to say, and He cries, Father, glorify Thy name, the thunder-voice replied, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." In the agony, there came an angel strengthening Him.

Hence we learn that inspiration is, first, not the result of will or effort, but is truly and properly from God. Yet that, secondly, it is dependent on certain conditions, granted to certain states, and to a certain character. Thirdly, that its sphere is not in things of sense, but in moral and spiritual truth. And fourthly, that it is not elaborated by induction from experience, but is the result of intuition. Yet, though inspiration is granted in its *fullness* only to rare, choice spirits like St. Paul, we must remember that in *degree* it belongs to all Christian experience. There have been moments, surely, in our experience, when the vision of God was clear. They were not, I will venture to say, moments of fullness, or success, or triumph. In some season of desertion, you have, in solitary longing, seen the sky-ladder as Jacob saw it of old, and felt heaven open even to *you*; or in childish purity—for "heaven lies around us in our infancy"—heard a voice as Samuel did; or, in some struggle with conscience and inclination, heard from Heaven the words, "Why persecutest thou *Me*?" or, in feebleness of health, when the weight of the bodily frame was taken off, whether it were in delirium or vision, you could not say, but Faith brightened her eagle eye, and saw far into the tranquil things of Death; or in prayer, you have been conscious of more than earth present in the silence, and a hand in yours, and a voice that you could hear, and you could almost feel the eternal breath upon your brow.

III. Lastly, this spiritual ecstasy is unutterable—unutterable, however, in two degrees:

First, they are "unspeakable," because they are untranslatable into the language of the intellect. The fruits of the Spirit—what are they? Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; how

can these be fully explained in human words? Our feelings, our convictions, our aspirations, our devotions, what sentences of earth can fully express them? Should a man or an angel from the heavenly world come and endeavor to speak to us of what he had seen, it would be utterly beyond his power. In the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation this has been attempted. I speak in all reverence, for though St. John was an inspired man, he could only use human language. He tells of the great white throne, and One there like a sardine stone, with the rainbow like an emerald shining round it; the four-and-twenty elders; the seven burning lamps; the sea of glass; the harpers with their harps; the lightnings, and thunderings, and voices. Thus does he, in high symbolic language, attempt, inadequately, to shadow forth the glory which his spirit realized, but which his sense saw not. For Heaven is not scenery, nor any thing appreciable by ear or eye: Heaven is God *felt*.

So also at Pentecost, when the afflatus of the Holy Ghost descended, and tongues of fire sat on each, the Apostles strove to utter their mighty feelings in articulate words of earth; they spake but incoherent utterances, insomuch that those around them, unable to enter into their feelings, and not having the key to them, said, "These men are *drunk* with new wine."

Again, this ecstasy was unutterable, because "*not lawful* for a man to utter." Christian modesty forbids. There are transfiguration moments, bridal hours of the soul: and not easily forgiven are those who would utter the secrets of its high intercourse with its Lord. There is a certain spiritual indelicacy in persons who can not perceive that not every thing which is a matter of experience and knowledge is, therefore, a subject for conversation. You can not discuss such subjects without vulgarizing them.

The things of heaven are too high to be expressed in words of earth, and every attempt to do so must not only fail, but degrade them. This is among the greatest evils of the Romish confessional, that it strives to make known to another what ought to be between God and the soul. Secret things belong to God.

Thus, when Elijah and Elisha went together from Gilgal to Jordan, the sons of the prophets came to Elisha with that confidential gossip which is common in those who think to understand mysteries by talking of them: "Knowest thou," they asked, "that the Lord will take away thy master to-day?" Remember Elisha's dignified reply: "Yea, I know it: hold ye your peace."

God dwells in the thick darkness. Silence knows more of Him than speech. His Name is secret: therefore beware how you profane His stillness. The *secret* of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and is felt by dwelling with God, by thinking of God, more than by talking of Him. To each of His servants He giveth "a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it."

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## LECTURE LIX.

2 CORINTHIANS xii. 6-11. *Sunday Afternoon, May 15, 1853.*

IN the exposition of the earlier verses of this chapter, we experienced a difficulty from St. Paul's speaking apparently of another man, owing to the fact that he had resolved to think of the humbled Paul as himself, and the vision-seer as not yet his real self. This distinction is evident (vs. 5, 6). He was anxious that neither himself nor the Corinthians should be deceived. Not himself, lest he should be puffed up. Not they, lest they should give to the creature the glory of the Creator. "Now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that he seeth me to be."

Before we proceed to the immediate subject we must make two preliminary observations. There is here an entire absence of any affectation of spirituality, of that sanctimoniousness which says, "Stand aside, I am holier than thou!" which throws a hedge of circumvallation around it, from a secret consciousness that, if this were broken through, it would be found to be but very commonplace goodness after all. Here lies the difference between first or second-rate goodness or greatness. What is vulgarly great and good, as the mere dignities of this world, must throw about them the barriers of etiquette and formality to awe the ignorant, who take *omne ignotum pro mirifico*. The apostle would say, "I desire to be seen just as I am, no more—as Paul the actual; Paul the vision-seer, Paul the visited of angels, is the Paul I shall be hereafter."

This is the characteristic of true greatness and genuine goodness. It needs no artifices—it can bear the sunlight. It is simple and real; it does not affect angels' food; it wears the undress of every-day life. And this was peculiarly the character of the man Christ Jesus. He was eminently accessible to all, simple, affectionate to the crowd which sur-

rounded Him, ever humble, so that His disciples, His friends, and even His enemies, were offended at it. He was compelled to say to His disciples, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not;" and at another time they urged Him, saying, "Master, send away this woman, for she crieth after us." They thought their Master so great that He would be vulgarized by those who came near Him. The Pharisees marvelled that He talked with publicans and harlots. Half-sighted men! contact with sinners could not vulgarize Him! The tinsel must be seen at a distance, or it will be discovered to be counterfeit. We may gaze on goodness, and the more we gaze the more it shines; like the sunlight, no less pure and beautiful when it brightens the wayside thistle, than when it glistens on the emeralds and the diamonds of a princely diadem.

There was in this conduct no affected unconsciousness of his spiritual gifts, his visions, his ecstasies, of his being caught up to the third heaven. He did not love to expatiate on these things—he avoided them—he trembled at speaking of them; but on suitable occasions he did not shrink from boldly confessing that he had had them; he pretended no ignorance of this privilege. And was not this vanity? Yes, if modesty is blindness or ignorance. The truth is, St. Paul knew his gifts, but he was kept humble because he remembered that there was another side of his character—he had the thorn in the flesh—the messenger of Satan to buffet him.

A vain man sees but one side of his character. The Pharisees accused even our Lord of vanity. Conscious of the hypocrisy of their own hearts, they said, "Thou bearest witness of Thyself, Thy witness is not true." Observe our Lord's indignant reply: "Though I bear witness of Myself, yet is My witness true. If I say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you." This will teach us how to cultivate modesty in ourselves, to watch the evil, and the deficiencies of our characters; and when we know *them* well, we may safely gaze upon, aye, and talk of our powers. He who can see with equal eye the balance of his deficiencies against his powers, who can see himself in some degree as God sees him, will have found the true secret of Christian modesty. This will teach us how to cultivate modesty in our children—not by denying their beauty or their accomplishments, under the idea that by recognizing them we may make them vain, for so we shall prove liars to them, if not by the words, at least by the admiration of others; but rather doing it by reminding them of the attainments to which they have *not* reached, of the excellence, beauties, and graces in others: thus will they

learn to estimate themselves properly, and to think modestly of whatever excellence God may have given them.

I. These verses treat of Christian trials, under the figure of a thorn in the flesh. We will consider their nature and their use. Many commentators have exercised great ingenuity in deep and learned disquisitions on the nature of this thorn, and we fear that they have been almost entirely wasted. In reality, we should inquire not *what* the thorn was, but *why* it was sent. We should look for general, rather than special truths in it. Some have imagined with great ingenuity that it was some sinful inclination to which the apostle was exposed; some have found it an impediment of speech; some have proved, to their own satisfaction, that it was a defect in eyesight; and others, some personal hindrance to popularity: but all this is but a waste of time. We have a general idea suggested at the 10th verse. We are sure that it was a trial partaking of the nature of a thorn; and that the apostle rejoiced in it—not *as* a thorn, but—because God's strength was given to support him under it.

There is something significant in the appellative, a thorn. Some trials are evidently not of the nature of a thorn; if we look fairly and closely into the subject, we shall see that it is not every cross which has this sign.

1. I infer that they were secret trials, unknown to others. A thorn is a small, invisible cause of suffering; a pang so small as to be unsuspected; some secret trouble, unknown even to our most intimate friends. For example, poverty. Poverty is not necessarily a secret trial; but there are things in it which are so: the many contrivances necessary to render poverty bearable; to the proud man, the constant humiliation it entails; to the generous, the pang of refusing charity. Thus every man has his thorn. It is wondrously instructive, as we pass through the crowded town, to see each face, except the very young, careworn, and having lines of suffering; and we are tempted to ask, Where are the happy ones? We may know a man, be intimately acquainted with him, and think his trials can not be many, his domestic circle is peaceful, his burdens must be light; but do we not now and then catch a sudden start of anguish passing across his brow, the causes of which are known only to God and himself? Well, he too has his thorn, and it is secret.

2. I infer that it is something evil, for he calls it a messenger of Satan to buffet him. We must not allow our understandings to be so perverted as to think that because pain

can be blessed to us, it is in itself a blessed thing, and ought to be liked by a Christian. Very unreal habits of thought are thus fostered. In the ages of monkery, squalor and filth and wretchedness were sometimes considered as the highest saintliness; and men coveted the pain rather than tried to get rid of it. Some argue that because it is written, "The poor shall never cease out of the land," that it is wrong to strive to put a stop to poverty: that because the curse of physical suffering fell upon one portion of our race, to seek for an anodyne for pain is to thwart the will of God.

Now the Bible is never unnatural. It calls these things evils, recognizes them as messengers from Satan, though often blessed by God—to be got rid of if possible. No theory can make poverty pleasant, or a toothache desirable, or bereavement delightful. The Christians rejoiced *in* tribulation—in God; but that in spite of, not because of, tribulation. And here God does not command St. Paul to think the throb of his thorn enjoyable. He only bids him bear it, because He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Only Yogis call physical evil good; and only monks consider pain and dirt the normal condition of Christian life.

3. A thorn causes perpetual, unvarying, incessant pain; to forget it is impossible; interfering with all pleasure and enjoyment, there is still the old rankling throb. It seems perversely to come in contact with every obstacle, just as a child fancies that every person maliciously strikes him on the place where the thorn is. And some sorrows are forever smarting like this: for example—some disgrace of lineage—some blot on our birth with which we have nothing to do, but which the world accounts our shame, sure to be remembered in the moment of triumph or hope. Some domestic incongruity, some family unhappiness, which the man may forget at his labor, in his shop, in the field; but the time comes when he must go home, and there is the thorn awaiting him. Some habit of mind that comes in solitude, which in the midst of society we may perhaps forget, but when we are *alone*, we feel that the thorn is there still.

Let that peculiar characteristic be remembered, as distinguishing the thorn from ordinary sorrows. It is an ever-present *possibility* of pang.

II. The spiritual uses of this experience. These are to make us humble, and to teach us our dependence, "Lest I should be exalted above measure." To guard us against spiritual pride. It is strange that this pride is felt for those things over which we have the least control, and to which

we have the least right. "What hast thou that thou hast not received? and how boastest thou, then, as though thou didst not receive it?" In the school, the vain boy, and he of whom his school-fellows are vain, is not he who has amassed knowledge by hard toil, but he whose brilliant genius is often made an excuse for idleness. He is not generally a vain man who has acquired learning by hard labor. Hereditary rank, over which we have no control, which only entails upon us greater responsibilities, and demands that we should be more noble and honorable than other men, this is often the cause of pride. He is not usually proud of wealth who has toiled from boyhood to old age to earn it, but rather he who has realized a fortune suddenly by a rash or lucky speculation. The real hard worker is seldom proud; he has known so much of his ignorance, his weakness, his powerlessness in the hard work of acquiring.

It is common to say, real talent and real genius are not vain. They are often very vain. The truth is this; honest, industrious genius, the really highest, is rarely vain; the merely gifted often are. So in things spiritual. The proud man is the man whose exquisite feelings and sublime sensibilities make him seem to himself as the porcelain to the pottery of ordinary mortals—he has aspirations and dreams, and lives in the third heaven, and is too grand to have to do with the soil of this low earth: and when this pride finds its way into the Church, those are not the spiritually proud who are doing good works, but those who substitute their frames and their fine feelings, and their true gospel, and some mysterious election, in the place of good works. Now it is exactly for the purpose of bringing all this down that God sends thorns. Sharp, bitter penury will guard a man from extravagance; and great reverses from reckless speculation will often bring to experience the meanness of debt. There is no better humiliator than constant physical pain: the feeling of the possible pang, the hour of thrilling agony that makes us cry with the Psalmist, "I am weary of my groaning."

By the constitution of our planet, there are peculiar trials to our physical frame; in the temperate zone, biting frosts and cold from the north and east; in the warmer climate, the serpent and the constant fever—everywhere there is the thorn in the flesh. This thorn might have been, perhaps, a tendency to sin. And the apostle could be brought even to rejoice in this, if it were only a tendency, without passing into actual sin. There is more than one person in this congregation who feels, as I am speaking, that he has a thorn of this kind; it may be indolence—he may be haunted by danger-

ous reverie—he may have evil thoughts tempting him continually to sin. My Christian brother, none knows but God how you have struggled with these thoughts, how you have battled with them on your knees, till they have seemed to rise up against you as a living, actual, personal enemy; like a sharp blade that has gone deep down even to the marrow, thrilling the nerves in living agony. They who have experienced it know well that there is no physical suffering they would not willingly receive in exchange for this; and yet take courage, my brother; be sure of this, His grace is sufficient for thee.

2. To teach us spiritual dependence. Brethren, there are two things widely different, yet often confounded together—liberty and independence; and this confusion has done infinite mischief. Liberty is one thing—independence another: a man is free, politically, whose rightful energies are not cramped by the selfish, unjust claims of another. A man is independent, politically, when he is free from every tie that binds man to man. One is national blessedness, the other is national anarchy. Liberty makes you loyal to the grand law, “I ought;” independence puts you in a position to obey the evil law, “I will.” So also religious freedom emancipates a man from every hindrance, external and internal, which prevents his right action. A man is not free who is enslaved by some lust, or who is restrained by Church thunders or by the rules of society from letting his intellect and conscience work truly. Every Christian ought to be a free man, but no Christian is or ought to be independent. As a member of a church, he is not independent of those with whom he is connected in what is called the communion of saints. He is not independent of his brethren.

What are the inspired injunctions? “Look not every man on his own things, but on the things of others.” “Bear ye one another’s burdens.” “All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient; if meat makes my brother to offend, I will eat no meat as long as I live.” Is that independence? There is no independence on earth; we are all dependent on the breath of God. Trial soon forces us to feel this. As well might the clouds that surround the setting sun, tinged with gold and vermilion, boast that they shone by their own light: the coming night would soon show them to be but a dim, dark, dense bank of vapor. We hang from hour to hour on God. When we know ourselves aright, we shall feel that we have nothing of our own that is good—that we are strengthless, powerless, and must depend entirely on His all-sufficient grace.



## LECTURE LX.

2 CORINTHIANS xii. 8, 9, 10. *Sunday Afternoon, May 29, 1853.*

OUR last subject was St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh." We considered it impossible to identify its special nature, but that it was possible to ascertain its general character. It was a figurative expression. The word "thorn" we found peculiarly suggestive of some secret sorrow; a real evil—not to be considered a good; not to be dealt with in a monkish or stoical spirit: a perpetual, incessant trial. And we found this to have been sent to teach humility and dependence. Humility—"lest I should be puffed up." Dependence—"My grace is sufficient for thee."

We may gather from this subject some disconnected but natural inferences. They are four:

I. The sanctifying power of sorrow. "For Christ's sake," that is the main point: the apostle took pleasure in pain, not as pain, but for Christ's sake. Sorrow is not naturally sanctifying. In itself sorrow has no magic power. Some are hardened, some embittered, some made selfish by chastisement. It is in happiness and not in sorrow that men feel best. In happiness they feel they can love God, and do His will best. Sorrow is like fire, whose effect depends upon the substance with which it comes in contact. Fire melts wax, inflames straw, and hardens clay. So it is only in afflictions borne for Christ's sake—that is, in Christ's name, and with Christ's spirit—that we can rejoice. Forasmuch as Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourself likewise with the same mind. The Cross alone extracts life out of pain and suffering; without this it is death-giving.

And observe, it is specially the humble, womanlike, passive side of endurance, the courage of patience, that is the peculiarity of the Cross. The Christian spirit is totally distinct from that of stoicism or mere manliness. It is one thing to bow to fate, and another to bow to God; it is one thing to submit because we must, and another because we ought. Perhaps there is nothing in the whole range of human history so sublime as the Stoic's defiance of pain; but

this is not the Spirit of Christ. All honor to courage; at the least it is unselfish, while cowardice *is* selfishness. The sailor who cuts out the ship under the fire of the enemy's batteries, is noble; the North American Indian suffering torture without a single groan; the man who has a vulture-sorrow gnawing at his heart, but who goes on with a stern defiance—a godlike indifference to the thing which is preying upon his very life—is sublime and grand; but the spirit of the Indian is one thing, and the Spirit of Christ another. The man who with closed teeth in his own room can resolve that no extremity of suffering shall wring from him one groan is manly; but manliness is not blessedness. He only can rejoice in infirmities, in reproaches, in suffering, who, taking the cup gently, lovingly, humbly into his hand, can drain it to the dregs, and say, as did his Master, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

II. We learn the strength of dependence (ver. 10) — "When I am weak, then I am strong." "My grace is sufficient for thee." This is the Christian paradox. A paradox is an apparent contradiction; it is that which is contrary to experience, as if a man were to say to another who was ignorant of a ravine that intervened, that the nearest way to a neighboring point was twelve miles round. There are two kinds of strength—that which we have in ourselves, and that which we derive from outward appliances and help. For example, the swimmer's strength when he buffets the tide is soon exhausted; but the same man's strength when the tide is with him, by a slight exertion, will bear him on for miles—the sailor's strength when he rows against the wind and stream, and when, almost passively employing the forces of nature, the wind or the waves carry him forward.

"When I am weak, then am I strong." Man is the weakest, and yet the strongest, of living creatures—because he obeys the laws of nature: he has the strength of the lion, the speed of the antelope; he bids the sun be his painter, and the lightning carry his messages, and the seas bear his merchandise; because he is the servant, therefore he is the master. This is precisely analogous to the way in which a man becomes spiritually strong. If he stand upon his own will, takes his own way, the strongest fails at last. Whatever may be his force of will, his genius, or his talent, if used against mankind, he must ultimately be overcome. The conqueror of the world died on the rock of St. Helena. And so, whoever does what is wrong, and says to evil, "Be thou my

good," whatever may be his adroitness, his resources, or his talent, will find that the laws of God's universe are against him, and too strong for him, because he is against God. It was no mere figure of poetry in Deborah's triumphant song, "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." Every thing fights against a man who is not on God's side, while he who does right, not because it is profitable, but because it *is* right, who loves the truth, arms himself with God's power, the universe is on his side, and he will surely know what the apostle meant when he said in the Epistle to the Romans, "All things work together for good to those that love God."

Thus did the Christians of old triumph—this was the history of the contest of one hundred and twenty weak men against the world: they were overwhelmed by sarcasm, exposed to lions, hurried to destruction, the earth was drenched with their blood; but a single fisherman could stand before the assembled rulers and say, "Whether it be good to obey you rather than God, judge ye." And eighteen centuries in the advance of Christianity has ploughed the result into the history of the world. *Because* they were weak, therefore they were strong. Our own strength must yield to pain. In the Middle Ages, those who had studied the arts of torture knew well that the man who could face the lion in the amphitheatre, or sit boldly on the heated iron seat, would be overcome by the simple dropping of water, day by day, on the same place, like the firm rock corroded by the waves of ages. So in the sense of a moral uprightness, we feel it impossible to do a thing abhorrent to our principles. "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" No, not a dog, but only a man—a man, yet relying on himself. Resign yourself passively to God; there is no other strength that lasts. Give up self-will. Lie like a child in your Father's hands, and then you will say in the depths of your spirit, "*When* I am weak, then am I strong;" "I am evil, but Thou art righteous; clothe me with Thy righteousness, and I shall be saved."

III. The Scripture view of God's reply to prayer. St. Paul besought God thrice that the thorn might be removed—when the answer came, not in the removal of the trial, but "My grace is sufficient for thee." Was this to deny the petition? No! it was to grant it in greater fullness. Here lies the difference between God's way and man's—man keeps the word of promise to the ear, but breaks it to the

hope; God keeps the promise to the hope, though he may seem to break it to the ear. For was not St. Paul's real desire—that which lay at the bottom of his request—this, to experience God's power in him? He loved those spiritual ecstasies with which the thorn seemed to interfere. But God showed him that it brought His presence in another and deeper way. Not as the Spirit came, in ecstatic triumph, as at Pentecost, but in a calmer, gentler manner, as the dew upon the grass; as he came in the office of the Comforter. Take a few examples of prayer: "O that Ishmael might live before thee." God gave the legitimate Isaac instead of the half-born. Abraham's prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah. The history of the man from whom the "Legion" was expelled. Here you have two prayers granted, in curse; one refused, in love. When the two disciples asked to sit, the one on His right hand and the other on His left, He said, "Ye know not what ye ask." In the dispensations of God there is no favoritism. The favor of God is only granted on certain laws and under certain conditions; and while He seemed to deny their request He granted it; for to sit on His right hand and His left, was to drink of His cup, and to be baptized with His baptism.

The common idea of prayer is, that it resembles the magic ring in the Oriental tale—as if it gave a power to man to bend the Will of God. But take as a crucial test the prayer of Christ—"Father, if it be possible, remove this cup from Me." Here were all the requisites of true prayer—humility, perfect submission, true faith; yet the cup did not pass from Him. Either the prayer of Christ was not granted—and to assert this were blasphemy—or God grants an answer to prayer in different ways. Think you that your prayers will get what Christ's did not—what you wish? Nay, but something better than what you wish—what God wills. Is that not better? Which was better, that the cup should pass from the Redeemer, or that He should have strength to drink it?—that the suffering should be avoided, or that an angel should strengthen Him?—that the apostle should have the thorn removed, or that grace sufficient to bear it should be given to him? The true value of prayer is not *this*—to bend the Eternal Will to ours; but *this*—to bend our wills to It. Not as *I* will, but as *Thou* wilt.

IV. The two-sided nature of man. It was the same man in the 2d and 3d verses as in the 10th, yet so different that the apostle spoke of them as two men. This may teach us

the lesson of our complex nature—somewhat of Divine, somewhat of human is within us; and both of these are sacred: Humanity is made up of both. In the Epistle to the Thessalonians, St. Paul says: “I pray God your whole body, and soul, and spirit may be preserved unto the coming of the Lord Jesus.” The body—the human affections and passions; the soul—according to the philosophy of that age—the rational powers; and the spirit—that on which God directly operates, and which apprehends the things of God: and the apostle prayed that not this spirit only, but the whole man, might be presented blameless. So we hear him say, “Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon;” that the Christian should have a glorified body, a sanctified intellect, and moral sense, and a spiritual power to love and serve God.

And this complex nature renders it impossible for us adequately to judge ourselves or each other. If we judge ourselves, we should either be vain or desponding. It has been said, “Could we but see ourselves as others see us;” but one friend would perhaps judge us by what he hears us say—some ecstatic desires and expressions, which are not hypocritical, but are yet aspirations up to which we have not power to live; another would judge us by the meannesses and littlenesses of our common prosaic life; and neither alone would be true. There are moments when we can soar above the world; when, by God’s Spirit, we deem nothing too high, too brave, too true, to which we may not aspire; when we could go through this world, with our staff in our hands, asking only to be permitted to believe, to suffer, and to love. And there are other times, when we are forced to feel that there is no meanness of which we are not capable; when we are so startled at ourselves, that we are ready to cry, “Can I be such a villain? Is there no difference between me, and one exposed to public infamy on the hulks or on the scaffold, save that he was tempted, and I was not?” I know that I am speaking the experience of many a man in this congregation, when I say that he has known something of these diviner feelings, and something of this feeling of inward degradation.

There are two sides to our character; one so evil, fallen, strengthless, that at times it is on the brink of hell; and one which is risen with Christ, redeemed in His resurrection, which seeks the things that are above, not those that are below; which brings us sometimes to the very verge of heaven; which makes us almost feel that the breath of God is

breathing upon us, and that we hear the harpings of the everlasting harps. The true Christian spirit is one of mingled loftiness and humility—of majesty and abasement—now with the stride of a conqueror and a king—now a captive, with the foot of the conqueror on his neck. Let us recognize our two selves; be humble for our evil self, but be thankful for our diviner self; and not, through affected modesty, ignore the blessed fact that God is with us. “Of such an one will I glory, but of myself I will not glory.”

END OF THE “LECTURES ON CORINTHIANS.”

LECTURES AND ADDRESSES  
ON  
LITERARY AND SOCIAL TOPICS.

BY THE LATE  
REV. FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON, M.A.,  
OF BRIGHTON.

TO  
WORKING-MEN,  
AND ESPECIALLY TO THE  
WORKING-MEN OF BRIGHTON,  
THIS [VOLUME],  
CONTAINING SO MANY OF THEIR FRIEND'S UTTERANCES  
IN THEIR BEHALF,  
*IS CORDIALLY DEDICATED.*



# LECTURES AND ADDRESSES.

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## AN ADDRESS

Delivered at the Opening of the Workingmen's Institute, on Monday, October 23, 1848.....Page 739

## SECOND ADDRESS.

Delivered to the Members of the Workingmen's Institute, at the Town Hall, Brighton, on Thursday, April 18, 1850, on the Question of the Introduction of Skeptical Publications into their Library..... 754

---

## TWO LECTURES ON THE INFLUENCE OF POETRY ON THE WORKING-CLASSES.

### LECTURE I.

Delivered before the Members of the Mechanics' Institution, February, 1852.. 763

### LECTURE II.

Delivered before the Members of the Mechanics' Institution, February, 1852.. 784

---

## LECTURE ON WORDSWORTH.

Delivered to the Members of the Brighton Athenæum, on February 10, 1853.... 805

## NOTES OF A LECTURE

Delivered at Hurstper-point, in 1851, to the Members of a Working-men's Reading-room.....Page 825

---

## SPEECHES.

### I.

A Speech delivered at the Town Hall, Brighton, April 24th, 1849, at a Meeting of the Inhabitants, called by the Early-closing Association, presided over by the Bishop of Chichester..... 827

### II.

A Speech delivered at a Meeting of the Brighton District Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes, held at the Pavilion, Brighton, November 25th, 1852..... 833

### III.

A Speech delivered at the Town Hall, Brighton, April 20th, 1852, in reply to an Address presented to him by One Hundred Young Men of his Congregation..... 837

### IV.

A Speech delivered at the Town Hall, Brighton, November 14th, 1850, at a Meeting held for the Purpose of Addressing the Queen in reference to the Attempt of the Pope of Rome to parcel England out into Ecclesiastical Dioceses under Cardinal Wiseman..... 838

# THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

# LECTURES AND ADDRESSES.

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## AN ADDRESS

*Delivered at the Opening of the Working-men's Institute,\* on Monday,  
October 23, 1848.*

BROTHER-MEN AND FELLOW-TOWNSMEN,—I owe it to you and I owe it to myself to give some explanation of my being here to-night to deliver an opening address to the Working-men's Institute. I owe it to you, or rather, to some of you, since it is only a few weeks ago that, on the plea of ill health, I professed myself unable to deliver a lecture to the Brighton Athenæum. Almost immediately after that I accepted your invitation, in which there is an apparent inconsistency. I owe it to myself, because there will lie against me, in the judgment of many, a charge of presumption. I have been in this town but a single year. I am but a stranger here. For one without name, without influence, without authority, without talent, to occupy a position so prominent as that which I occupy to-night, would really seem to justify a suspicion of something like vanity and assumption.

My reasons for undertaking this office are these: I did it partly on personal grounds. It would be affectation to deny that the spontaneous request of a body of men, delegated by a thousand of my fellow-townsmen, is a source of very great satisfaction. It gave me great pleasure, at the same time that it deeply humbled me. I earnestly wish I were more worthy of the confidence reposed in me. My second reason for standing before you to-night is a public one. It seems to me a significant circumstance that your request was made to a clergyman of the Church of England. A minister of the Church of England occupies a very peculiar position. He stands, generally by birth, always by position, between the higher and lower ranks. He has free access to the mansion of the noble, and welcome in the cottage of the laborer. And if I understand aright the mission of a minister of the Church of England, his peculiar and sacred call is, to stand as a link of union between the two extremes of society; to demand of the highest in this land, with all respect but yet firmly, the performance of their duty to those beneath them; to soften down the asperities, and to soothe the burning jealousies which are too often found rankling in the minds of those who, from a position full of wretchedness, look up with almost excusable bitterness on such as are surrounded with earthly comforts.

It seemed to me that such an opportunity was offered me to-night. The delivery of a lecture to the Brighton Athenæum on a literary subject was a

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\* A third edition of this pamphlet having been called for, I have sent it to the press unaltered; for though the Working-men's Institute, owing to certain errors in the details of its organization, has for the present ended in partial failure, yet the very circumstances of its history have only confirmed me more than ever in the principles which it was attempted to express in the following pages.—F. W. R., Oct. 1850.

secular duty, and one from which I felt I might fairly shrink on the valid plea of ill health; but the demand that you made upon me for this evening, though I urged it upon you that you had not selected the right man, was a sacred duty, which I felt it was impossible for me, on any merely personal grounds, to refuse. And if your call on a minister of the Church of England this evening may be taken as any exhibition of trust in the sympathy of those classes between whom and yourselves he stands as a kind of link—if my acceptance of the call may be regarded as evincing a pledge of their sympathy towards you—then, though all I say to-night may be weak and worthless, I shall not feel that I have spoken to you in vain, and to myself at least I shall stand acquitted of the charge of presumption.

I began to address you to-night by the name of brother-men; I did not adopt the expression which my friend Mr. Holtham used in reference to your Committee. Yet, after all, we are at one. He did not mean to say that you are “gentlemen.” He meant to say that you have, and that there was no reason why you should not have, the feelings of gentlemen. To say that a man is noble, does not mean that he is a nobleman. I do not call you gentlemen, because I respect you too much to call you what you are not. You are *not* gentlemen. To address an assembly of gentlemen by the title of “my lords,” would be to insult them; and to address working-men as “gentlemen,” would be felt by you as an insult to your understanding.

The people of this country stand in danger from two classes; from those who fear them, and from those who flatter them. From those who fear them, and would keep down their aspiring intelligence, they have no longer much to fear. The time is past for that; that cry of a wretched, narrow bigotry is almost unheard of now. But just in proportion as that danger has passed away has the other danger increased—the danger from those who flatter them. From the platform and the press we now hear language of fulsome adulation, that ought to disgust the working-men of this country. There has ever been, and ever will be, found sycophancy on the side of power.

In former ages, when power was on the side of the few, the flatterer was found in kings' houses. The balance of power is changed. It is now not in the hands of the few, but in the hands of the many. I say not that that is the best state conceivable; there might be a better than that. We would rather have power neither in the hands of the privileged few nor in the hands of the privileged many, but in the hands of the wisest and best. But this is the present fact, and every day is carrying the tide of power more strongly into the hands of the numbers; for which reason there will be ever found flatterers on the side of the many.

Now, whether a man flatters the many or the few, the flatterer is a despicable character. It matters not in what age he appears; change the century, you do not change the man. He who fawned upon the prince or upon the duke had something of the reptile in his character; but he who fawns upon the masses in their day of power is only a reptile which has changed the direction of its crawling. He who in this nineteenth century echoes the cry that the voice of the people is the voice of God, is just the man who, if he had been born two thousand years ago, would have been the loudest and hoarsest in that cringing crowd of slaves who bowed before a prince invested with the delegated majesty of Rome, and cried, “It is the voice of a God, and not of a man.” The man who can see no other source of law than the will of a majority, who can feel no everlasting law of right and wrong, which gives to all human laws their sanction and their meaning, and by which all laws, whether they express the will of many or of the few, must be tried—who does not feel that he, single and unsupported, is called upon by a mighty voice within him to resist every thing which comes to him claiming his allegiance as the expression of mere will, is exactly the man who, if he had lived seven centuries

ago, would have stood on the sea-sands beside the royal Dane, and tried to make him believe that his will gave law to the everlasting flood. For this reason I have not used this expression. I have not used it, because I would not flatter you even by an epithet. I respect you too much to flatter you. I used another title of address. For there are two bases of union on which men may be bound together. One is similarity of class, the other is identity of nature. The class feeling is a feeble bond; for he who feels awe for another man because he is in a rank above him, will cease to feel that awe if ever the man should cease to belong to that class. The pauperized aristocrat and the decayed merchant are soon neglected by their class. The man who respects another because he is in the same rank as himself, may cease to feel respect in one of two ways—either by his own elevation, in which case he tries to keep the distinction broad between himself and the class that he has left, or else by the depression of that other man through any misfortune.

Now there is another and a broader bond of union to be found in identity of nature. When all external differences have passed away, one element remains intact, unchanged, the everlasting basis of our common nature—the human soul by which we live. “We all are changed by slow degrees. All but the basis of the soul.” Our tendencies to evil, our capacities of excellence, are the same in all classes. It is just in proportion as men recognize this real, original identity of all human nature, that it is possible on this earth to attain the realization of human brotherhood. It is the only possible ground of union for the race. It was because this was not felt by the Jews of ancient times that they held themselves and their race proudly distinct from their Gentile brothers, and by that bigotry worked out their own inevitable downfall. The Christian of the Middle Ages tortured his Jew brother just because he did not recognize the same identity of sentiment and moral nature, which the great poet of our country has put so passionately and so touchingly into the lips of Shylock: “Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian?” Had the feudal lord believed this he would not have put an iron collar round his serf’s neck, nor made one law for the serf and another for the free-born. In our own times, if men who have been crying for the rights of our common humanity and the duties of our common brotherhood had understood the deep, glorious meaning of their own cry, we should have heard nothing of those human tortures and that infernal cannibalism which have disgraced the cause of freedom. Get this deeply by heart, and all that is galling in artificial distinctions will pass away. Well do I know that this language I am using now respecting brotherhood and the equality of our human nature is language that passes into cant. It has been defiled by cruelty; it has been polluted by selfishness; but we will not be ashamed of it, for all that. In an age in which it has become suspicious, we will dare to believe in it and love it. It is buried deep in the eternal truth of things. That truth can no more pass away from the things that are, than heaven and earth can pass away. Sooner or later it must be realized in a more substantial form than it has yet ever assumed. All gradual improvements, all violent convulsions in the world, are only doing their part in bringing this about. The thunder-storm is terrible to look upon, but it leaves behind it a purer air and a serener sky. Let us hear the Ayrshire ploughman in his high prophetic strain:

For a’ that, and a’ that,  
It’s coming yet for a’ that,  
That man to man the world o’er  
Shall brothers be for a’ that.

Therefore it is that, passing by all those abortive attempts which would fain

produce a feeling of union by the false idea of similarity of class, I have fastened my attention on the real equality of our common nature, and called you "brother-men."

In my address to-night, I propose to let its topics be suggested by the expressions of your own sentiments contained in the paper which your Committee put into my hand. That paper specifies the objects of your institution, and the spirit in which it has been established.

The objects of the institution are two: it is intended to provide the working-men of this town with the means of mental, and, besides that, with the means of moral, improvement. Farther down I find mental improvement separated by you into two divisions. Mental improvement, you say, is the information of the intellect, and the elevation of the taste. You wish to inform the intellect. I confine myself to-night to one branch of this improvement, political information. I do it for several reasons. First of all, the means of acquiring knowledge which your institution places in your hands are in a very preponderating degree of a political character. By works of history and the newspapers of the day, you will have that which will inform you of the constitution of your country.

My second reason for dwelling chiefly upon this branch of mental improvement is, that political science is the highest education that can be given to the human mind. Let me explain myself. When we in popular phraseology speak of politics, we ascribe to that word a narrow meaning. When we say that two men are talking politics, we often mean that they are wrangling about some mere party question. When I use the term "politics" this evening, I use it in the sense in which it was used by all the great and noble authors of the ancient world, who meant by the science of politics the intelligent comprehension of a man's position and relations as a member of a great nation. You will observe that in this sense politics subordinate to themselves every department of earthly science. A man who understands nothing of agriculture, nothing of trade, nothing of human nature, nothing of past history, nothing of the principles of law, can not pretend to be more than a mere empiric in political legislation. Every thing that man can know is subservient to this noble science. Understood in this sense, the working-men of this country have an interest in politics. For, in the first place, political ignorance is not a safe thing for this or any other country. The past is a proof of that. What was it but political ignorance which dictated a few years ago the letters signed "Swing," when the laboring men burned the hay-rick and the corn-stack in the wise expectation of bettering their own condition by that?

It needed very little political economy to teach them that all the wages in the world would not make a country rich, when its real resources are destroyed; that gold is but the symbol of another and a more real wealth for which it stands as the convenient expression; that the increase of their money would not give any increase in their comforts; and that when the country's means of subsistence are diminished all the coin in the country could not enrich them. What was it but political ignorance that suggested the workman's strike for wages? A very little political information would have told him that it is to a small extent that the master can regulate the wages he gives; that they depend on many things over which he has no control, as, for instance, on the supply of labor in the market and on the demand for the commodity. Besides this, if there be a man in the country to whom politics are of personal consequence, it is the laboring man. A man in the higher classes may turn his attention to them, if he likes; nothing *forces* him to do so. It is to him a matter of amusement, a speculation—a theoretical curiosity—not necessarily any thing more. The difference of a penny in the price of a loaf makes no perceptible change on his table; but it may make the poor

man's grate empty for a fortnight. If an unfair tax be imposed, a man in the upper ranks will scarcely be compelled to retrench a luxury in his establishment; but to the poor man it is almost a matter of life and death. Therefore a laboring man will be, must be, a politician; he can not help it; and the only question is, whether he shall be an informed one or an uninformed one. To him politics are a thing of daily feeling; but the man who feels a wrong most severely is not generally the man who is in the best state for calmly ascertaining the causes of the wrong. The child which feels the pin that pricks, knows better than any one can tell it that there is something wrong; but it is not exactly the one to judge, when it strikes at random, whether it be the nurse's fault or the fault of circumstances. The uneducated man is precisely in the same position; he feels politically the sharpness and the torture of his position; but he is just as likely, in his exasperation, to raise his hand against an innocent government as against a guilty one. Therefore it was that in past times, when a pestilence came, the poorer classes, believing that it was caused by the medical men of the country for their own benefit, visited their fury upon them. They felt keenly, they struck wrongly. Tell us, then, whether it be safe and whether it be wise that the poor man, or that any class, should be profoundly ignorant of politics?

There is another reason, one more important still, for extending political knowledge. In this free country the laboring-man has already a political responsibility. By degrees he will have, and ought to have, more. There is scarcely a man standing before me who has not something to do with the political government of his country. It may be that he has a vote in the vestry; or he is liable to be called on to serve on the jury, where he disposes of the life and liberty of his fellow-subjects; or perhaps he has a vote in the election of a member of Parliament. The possession of that vote gives to the working-man a solemn responsibility. Let us not be told that the injury done by a wrong vote is small; it is not so that we measure responsibility. If there be a million voters, and a man votes corruptly, it is true, it is but the millionth part of the injury which may arise from a bad law that is attributable to him; but responsibility is measured not by the amount of injury which results, but by the measure of distinctness with which the conscience has the opportunity of distinguishing between right and wrong. That man is not worthy of a vote in this country who gives his vote to the temptation of a bribe; neither is he worthy who bribes a man to vote against his conscience. That man is not worthy of a vote who intimidates another; nor is he worthy who suffers himself to be intimidated. That man misuses his privilege who corrupts by exclusive dealing; so does he who votes solely from self or class interest. For example, if the agriculturist voted for the retention of the corn laws because they enhanced the price of his corn, though he believed it would be to the injury of the rest of the community, that man was not worthy of a vote. On the other hand, if the manufacturer voted for the abolition of the corn laws, because he believed it would be good for the manufacturing interest, without considering how it would bear on the residue of the nation, that man exercised his vote wrongly; his vote was given him for the good of the nation, and he was sacrificing the whole of the nation to a part of it.

Now let me say another thing without offense. I scarcely know whether it is quite fair to say it on this occasion; but I feel perfectly confident that every honest supporter of the People's Charter will not misunderstand me. I will not say that that man is not worthy of a vote; but I will say, and I believe your feelings will only echo mine, that that man has not attained the true, lofty spirit of a British freeman who requires the protection of secrecy in his voting, who dares not risk the consequence of doing right, who has not manhood enough, except from behind the ballot-box, to do his duty to his

country and his God. Now to vote in this way, to vote incorruptibly, to vote on high motives, to vote on large principles, to vote bravely, requires a great amount of information. How far will the machinery of this institution insure this? Only partially. We do not expect it will make the corrupt voter honest; it will not make the selfish voter liberal; but at least it offers the means of saving the honest voter from the consequences of his own ignorance, and of rescuing him from being the passive victim of the demagogue, or being compelled to throw his vote blindly into the hands of his landlord or his employer.

I pass to the second division of which you speak—the elevation of the taste. Taste is perception of beauty; to have taste is to recognize that which is right and congruous. When we speak of the moral sense, we mean the power of distinguishing between right and wrong; when we speak of taste, we mean the faculty of distinguishing that which is fitting from that which is unbecoming. There are many things which are neither right nor wrong, but which are yet offensive to good taste. It is not morally wrong to sit covered in the presence of a superior; but it is an offense against the propriety of manners. The juxtaposition of yellow and olive green is not a moral fault; but it is a fault to the eye which perceives the harmony of colors. There is nothing *wicked* in wearing a hat in a sacred building, or in discussing religious questions when the toast and the health are going round; but there is something which is exceedingly offensive to the feelings of religious propriety. The perception of all these harmonious fitnesses is what we denominate refinement, in contradistinction to vulgarity. But by vulgarity I do not mean the infringement of those laws which conventionality or fashion has laid down; for if fashion choose to decide that a man shall dine at seven, and he prefers instead to dine at one, though this may be a conventional, it is not a real vulgarity.

Vulgarity is quite distinct from non-conformity to arbitrary rules. We have sometimes met the deepest, truest refinement of heart in the man whose hands are black with laboring at the forge; we have met the greatest real vulgarity in the man whose manners wore a perfect outward polish, and who would never infringe the smallest rule of etiquette. In this sense do I speak of taste as a matter of importance to the working-men of this country. What is it that prevents sympathy between class and class? Not merely difference of opinion, but difference of taste. The difference in feeling between educated and uneducated men places a great gulf between them. We are attracted and repelled by our instinctive sympathies even more than by our intellectual views. Let no one tell us that the workman can not become refined; he is a refined man in foreign countries. Vulgarity is a thing almost exclusively English. Look at the poor Hindoo who goes through your streets asking alms. There is a grace even in his very attitude, an elegance in his address, which would almost make you believe it if you were told that he had been a prince in his own land. You may see, or might have seen, two peasants meeting on a high-road in France, and taking off their hats to each other with grave and dignified courtesy. The French peasant girl at a very trifling expense will dress herself in clothes that befit her station; but the inward refinement of her mind will be so reflected on the adjustment of every part of them, that she looks better dressed than the English lady's maid with all the aid of her mistress's cast-off finery.

There is another thing. The refinement of the workman's mind is a matter of importance in the works of art. Let any mercer place the silk that comes from Spitalfields beside that which comes from Lyons, and tell us if the one in point of elegance of design will bear any comparison with the other? Let the English watch-maker place his watch beside the delicate fabric of Geneva, or his clock beside that which comes from Paris, and tell us



whether it be not rude and clumsy in comparison? Let the English china-maker place the manufactures of Worcestershire and Yorkshire on the same table with those of Sévres or of Dresden, and the superior beauty of the foreign article is visible at once. We are beaten out of the market whenever it comes to a question of taste. The reason is generally acknowledged to be this—that on the Continent the artist has freer access to that which is beautiful in taste and art. In the designs which adorn the Parisian clocks, you may trace the forms of beauty which existed originally in the minds of Raffaele and Titian, and transfused themselves upon the work insensibly through every touch of one whose fancy had been inspired and kindled at the living sources of the beautiful.

A few years ago I was engaged in chamois-hunting among the crags and glaciers of the Tyrol. My companion was a Tyrolese chamois-hunter, a man who, in point of social position, might rank with an English laborer. I fear there would be a difficulty in England in making such a companionship pleasurable and easy to both parties; there would be a painful obsequiousness or else an insolent familiarity on the one side, constraint on the other. In this case there was nothing of that sort. We walked together and ate together. He had all the independence of a man, but he knew the courtesy which was due to a stranger; and when we parted for the night, he took his leave with a politeness and dignity which would have done no discredit to the most finished gentleman. The reason, as it seemed to me, was that his character had been moulded by the sublimities of the forms of the outward nature amidst which he lived. It was impossible to see the clouds wreathing themselves in that strange wild way of theirs round the mountain crests, till the hills seemed to become awful things, instinct with life—it was impossible to walk, as we did sometimes, an hour or two before sunrise, and see the morning beams gilding with their pure light the grand, old peaks on the opposite side of the valley, while we ourselves were still in deepest shade, and look on that man with his rifle on his shoulder and his curling feather in his high green hat, his very exterior in harmony with all around him, and his calm eye resting on all that wondrous spectacle, without feeling that these things had had their part in making him what he was, and that we were in a country in which men were bound to be polished, bound to be more refined, almost bound to be better men than elsewhere.

Mr. Wordsworth, one of the great teachers of our nation's feeling, has explained to us in many a passage how all these forms of God's outward world of beauty are intended to perform an office in the refinement of the heart. He has painted his country girl educated by the sky above her, the colors of the hills, the sound of the waterfalls:

Till beauty, born of murmuring sound,  
Shall pass into her face.

Now there are two things in your institution which might educate taste of this kind—works of poetry and works of fiction. By poetry we do not mean, simply, verse or rhyme. In a hundred thousand verses there might be not one thought of poetry. Neither does poetry mean something which is fanciful and unreal. By poetry we mean invisible truth as distinct from that which is visible. Not every invisible truth; not, for example, the invisible truths which are perceivable by the understanding, as mathematics; but the invisible realities which are recognized by the imagination. We will take an illustration. You look at this England, intersected with its railways, and say it is becoming a dull, prosaic thing. The sentimentalist will tell you it has broken up all the poetry of the scene, because it has run through our pleasure-grounds, sadly cut up our old retreats and solitudes, and destroyed all classical associations. So it may have done. It has destroyed that which was

associated with the poetry of the past ; but it has left us the real poetry of the present. Let men look upon that railroad, and one will see nothing but the machine that conveys the travellers to their destination. This is a truth, but only a visible one. The engineer comes and sees in it another class of truths. It suggests to his mind the idea of broad and narrow gauge, he talks of gradients, etc ; another truth—that which is appreciable by the understanding. Then let the poet come with that eye of his “glancing from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,” and his imagination creates another class of truths ; the suggested meaning of it to him is the triumph of mind over matter ; the gradual annihilation of time and space. He sees in these railroads stretched throughout the country the approaching times of peace and human union ; and so he bursts out into his high prophetic song of the time :

When the war-drum throbs no more, and the battle-flags are furled,  
In the parliament of man, the federation of the world.

All this is truth ; neither seen nor reasoned truth, but truth to the imagination. Truth just as real in its way, as the others are in theirs. And this is poetry. For this reason is poetry a thing needful for the working-man. His whole life, if he could be taught to feel it, is full of deep, true poetry. The poet teaches him by suggestive inspiration the hidden meaning of common things, transfiguring life, as it were, by shedding a glory on it ; and if you will force the poor man to see nothing but the wretched reality that is around him, if you will not let his mind be enlightened by the invisible truth of things, if you will not let him learn from the master-thinkers of the past how in his work, in his smoky cabin, in his home affections, there is a deep significance concealed, connecting him, when he once has felt it, with the highest truths of the invisible world, you condemn the worker to a desolate lot indeed.

You have a second class of means in your institution for refining taste—works of fiction. It is in vain to rail at these with indiscriminate censure. Read they will be, and read they must be ; and if we are asked the reason why works of fiction are matters of importance, the best reply which has been suggested is, that they enlarge the heart, enabling us to sympathize with the hearts of a larger circle of the human race than that into which our own experience admits us. You are all familiar with the works of Dickens. The effect of that man's writings upon English feelings and English sympathies is quite incalculable. The peculiar feature of his works is, that their scenes are always placed in the ordinary walks of life. It is the character of all fiction now. The Clarissas and Grandisons of past ages have disappeared, and the life exhibited to us now is that of the lower classes of society. Men who, by reading the works of Cooper, had learned to feel that there was a real human life in the heart of the red Indian of the prairie, and who, by reading the works of Scott, learned that beneath the helmets and mail of iron which rust in our armories, human passions and affections once beat warm, were insensibly taught by the works of Dickens to feel that in this country, close to their own homes, there was a truth of human life the existence of which they had not suspected. We all remember the immense sensation those works made at first. If you asked the lady who was getting out of her coroneted carriage at the bookseller's shop what it was she wanted, you were told she had come to inquire if the new number of Dickens's last work were out yet. If you saw a soldier on the turnpike-road with his knapsack on his back, reading as he went, and stepped up behind him, and looked over his shoulder, hoping perhaps to see that it was a tract, you saw it was the same everlasting Dickens. From the throne to the cottage this was true. What was the result of this ? Imperceptibly, one which all the pulpits of the country would have been glad to combine in producing. The hearts of the rich and poor were felt to throb together. Men came to find that the rustic altar binds together

two human hearts of man and woman with exactly the same feelings and anxieties and loves, as the marriage performed in the drawing-room, which united peers and peeresses. They discovered that when death enters into the poor man's hovel, it is just as much a rending asunder of a soul and body as if a spirit had been breathed away beneath a coverlet of silk. They came to find, too, that the lower classes have not a monopoly of all the simplicities of life, nor the upper classes the monopoly of all its absurd pride. People who lived in the highest ranks of life were startled to find that their own foolish jealousies had their exact repetition in the life which was going on beneath them. The ridiculous scorn with which the ancient family looks down upon the newly ennobled, and the newly ennobled looks down on the newly rich, has its exact counterpart in the sovereign contempt with which the small shop-keeper, in his shop six feet square, looks down on the poor apple-woman who has dared to bring her barrow too near the sacred neighborhood of his aristocratic board. This was the achievement of these works of fiction. It was a lesson to us all, of humbleness, and sympathy, and mutual toleration; one step towards expanded love. And we can see no reason why such works should be injurious to the workman. We believe it is a narrow religion which scowls upon them all without discrimination. And the man of labor is free from one injury which arises to the man of leisure, from reading works of fiction. Works of fiction have in them an excitement for the feelings, in which one of their dangers lies. Every man has experienced how feelings which end in themselves, and do not express themselves in action, leave the heart debilitated. We get feeble and sickly in character when we feel keenly, and can not do the things we feel. This is a great danger for the uncultured and idle in the upper classes; but it is not possible that it should be so great a danger to the workman; his labor keeps him safe from it; so that it is perfectly possible for him, by reading works of fiction, to have his heart purified and refined by sympathy, at the same time that he gets something which is healthy and invigorating to counteract it in his hourly familiarity with the realities of toil and acting.

We come next to the moral improvement which you are anxious to effect. You explain this moral improvement to be "the elevation of the habits of the working-man." You have, surely, begun at the right end. There are two ways of improving a nation's state; the one is by altering the institutions of the country, the other is by the reformation of its people's character. The one begins from things outward, and expects to effect a change in things inward; the other takes this line—from things inward to things outward. The latter is the right plan, and you have adopted it.

I believe I am addressing men of every shade of political opinion. There may be among us Tories, many of them men of whom, whether they be right or wrong, this country has reason to be proud, for few other soils could produce them; men who felt that law is but an expression of a divine will, that the sovereign is the symbol of that will, and therefore in their way talked too about the divine right of kings, and believed most religiously that the happiness of this country depended on the connection of Church and State. I know that I address Whigs here to-night, of that party who gave the most distinct expression to their doctrines when, by our glorious Revolution, they stamped forever on the Constitution that great cardinal truth, that law is not the creature of the ruler, but that the ruler is the creature of, and owes his continuance to, the law. It is probable that I speak to Conservatives to-night, who, if we let them give their own account of their opinions, have seen in the teaching of all past history that nations have had their seasons—infancy, manhood, and old age; and, believing that England has reached the zenith of her manhood, are consistently opposed to all progress, because every step of progress seems to them a step towards decay. I may be speaking to

Radicals to-night, who, if asked for the definition of their principles, would say, "Radicalism means root-work—the uprooting of all falsehoods and abuses," and who would not hesitate in all solemnity of feeling to sanction their feelings by a divine principle, and take this text for their motto—"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

Lastly, I address men of another class altogether; who have felt burdens which crush the millions of the working-classes with intolerable agony; and, believing that only by throwing power into the hands of the majority, England's happiness can be secured, do therefore honorably and conscientiously build all their hopes on the people's charter as the first step to be secured. And whether I agree with their political views or not, I will never shrink from saying, in any society, that I am personally acquainted with Chartists, the integrity of whose purpose, the unselfishness of whose character, the firmness of whose principle is such, that if all resembled them, if all base men, whether high or low, could only be removed from the land, then the brightest day that England ever saw would be the day on which she got her universal suffrage; for universal suffrage would mean then only the united voices of all good men.

Now whichever of these views may be right—and I am not going to venture an opinion on that subject this evening—whichever of these opinions may be right, there is a quackery in every one of them that pretends, by the realization of itself, to give to this country all she needs. For instance, if a Tory gets what he wishes—a perfect loyalty, and his pattern kingdom should be only this—a tyrant sovereign, and a nation of slaves, I think he would say himself his Toryism would do us no good. If the Conservative were to obtain his wish, "things as they are," and this were to leave us nothing but stagnation, moral, political, and intellectual, I think conservatism would do us no more good than toryism. If the Whig and the Radical were to realize their scheme, the entire overthrow of all abuses, the triumph of the sovereignty of law, and yet with that we got, as we might easily get, only a nation without reverence, and the abolition of old sacred associations, the heart of the country being left morally diseased and sick, whiggism would be as ineffectual as toryism or conservatism. Lastly, if the Chartist got all he wanted—universal suffrage, vote by ballot, equal electoral districts, annual Parliaments, paid representatives, and no property qualification, and he should succeed in transferring all power into the people's hands, and yet it were to turn out that the majority were just as corrupt and depraved as the minority had been before them, every honest Chartist will tell us that his chartism would have been a failure, and was not worth the having.

Now the plan that you have adopted in this institution seems to me to exactly reverse that order of procedure. You have said, "We will reform ourselves, and then the institutions will reform themselves." And in doing this you have surely proceeded in the rightful order; for if the heart of a nation be wise and right, you may depend upon it the laws of that nation will never long remain radically wrong. Free institutions will never of themselves make free men out of men who are themselves the slaves to vice; but free men will inevitably express their inward character in their outward institutions. The spirit of every kingdom must begin first "within you."

I now proceed to offer you two or three cautions with respect to your institution. First, we must not expect too much from it. There is no magic, no enchantment, in a library and reading-room. They will not make a man wise or good in spite of himself, or without effort of his own. They will leave each man what he was before, except that they will put into his hands means of amelioration. The man who was the mere loungee in the streets will become the loungee in the institute; the man who was the mere miserable politician there will remain the mere politician in the reading-room. The man

who got excitement from drinking will now get excitement from the newspaper.

The next suggestion is, that we must be prepared for a great deal of evil. It is utterly impossible to look on this great movement without seeing clearly in the distance a large possibility of evil. The motto on one of your papers is, "Knowledge is power." It is a truth that is glorious, but at the same time terrible. Knowledge is power, power for good and evil. It is a power that may elevate a man by degrees up to an affinity with his Maker; it is a power that may bring him by degrees down to the level even of Satanic evil. Increased mental power will be the result of this plan—possibly that power will be devoted to bad purposes in many instances; it may become what it is not meant to be, the engine of some political party. Grant this. But are we to abstain from the granting of this power because of the possibility of its being turned to evil? Why, on that principle no good could be done at all. Good in this world can not be done without evil. Evil is but the shadow that inseparably accompanies good. You may have a world without shadow; but it must be a world without light, a mere dim, twilight world. If you would deepen the intensity of the light, you must be content to bring into deeper blackness and more distinct and definite outline the shade that accompanies it. He that feels timid at the spectral form of evil is not the man to spread light. There is but one distinct rule that we can lay down for ourselves, and that is, to do the good that lies before us, and to leave the evil which is beyond our control to take care of itself. In this world the tares and the wheat grow together, and all we have to do is to sow the wheat. If you will increase the rate of travelling, the result will be an increase in the number of accidents and deaths; if you will have the printing-press, you must give to wickedness an illimitable power of multiplying itself. If you will give Christianity to the world, He who knew what his own religion was, distinctly foresaw, and yet, foreseeing, did not hesitate to do his work, that in giving to the world inward peace, it would bring with it the outward sword, and pour into the cup of human hatred, already brimming over, fresh elements of discord, religious bitterness, and theological asperity. Our path is clear. Possibilities of bad consequences must not stand in the way of this work. I see one thing clearly—the laboring men in this town have a right to their reading-room and library, just as much as the higher classes have a right to their clubs, and the middle classes to their Athenæums. Let no cowardly suspicion deter from generous sympathy. Give them their rights. Let the future take care of itself.

The other suggestion is this: Let not a public benefit become a domestic evil. In the upper classes it has been complained that the club has been the destruction of domestic comfort. It is easy for a man who has a few hundreds a year, by means of combination, to live at the rate of thousands. He may have his liveried servants, his splendid hall, his sumptuous entertainments—and for this he may desert his home. The same may be one of the results of this plan of yours. But if a man wants an excuse to stay away from home, he will find it, whether this institute exist or not. Moreover, it is not a comfortable, happy home that men will leave, but a home made wretched by a wife's slatternly conduct, the absence of cleanliness, the want of that cheerful, affectionate greeting which a man has a right to expect when he returns harassed and half maddened from the exhaustion of his daily work. Therefore, let there be a generous rivalry between your wives and daughters and this institute. I tell them they have got now a rival. Let them try which has most attractions—a comfortable reading-room or a happy home.

I turn next to the spirit in which your undertaking has been carried on. I find in it two things, independence and generous reliance. You might have had an institution on a different principle. It is conceivable that some

wealthy philanthropist might have provided you all this at his own cost. You might have had a finer room, more brilliant lights, a better furnished library; but every man who entered that room would have felt his independence destroyed. He would have felt a kind of mental pauperism, getting his intellectual food at another's expense; and there is nothing that destroys all manhood so effectually as dependence upon the patronage of others. Now you have been independent. You have said, "We are men; we are not children; we will educate ourselves—it is our own duty." You have brought to bear the principle of combination. The subscription of one penny a week would go a very little way for one man. But a penny a week from one thousand men amounts to more than two hundred pounds at the end of a year. Enough, with a little assistance, for all you want. You have cleansed the building, washed it, papered it, furnished it, all with your own hands. Every man among you by this will, in the first place, feel independent: in the second place, he will have that elevation of character which arises from the feeling of property. Property calls out all the virtues of forethought, care, respect. The books, the furniture, all are yours. The sense of honest property in them will insure that they shall be taken care of. Long may this spirit be characteristic of English working-men. We can understand and honor the feelings of that man who stands before us with a modest feeling of his own dignity in his countenance, which seems to say, "The shoes that I wear are clouted, but I paid for the mending of them myself; the house that I live in is small, but every sixpence of the rent is paid for with my own money. It may be that my clothes are shabby and threadbare; but no man can say that the begging petition, except in case of the direst necessity, ever went round the town in my name." The greatest on earth has no right to look down on that man.

But not content with this, you have manifested the spirit of reliance upon others for their good-will. There is one kind of independence which is akin to high excellence; another which is akin to restless, jealous pride. The former has been yours. Guarding yourselves against the idea of receiving charity, you have said to those who are better off than yourselves, "We will accept gratefully the books you choose to give us, we will thank you for your sympathy." Now let me say, with all the conviction of my heart, I believe that you have the sympathy of the upper classes. I stand not here to be the special pleader for the rich, or the defender of the vices of those around me. In other places I have spoken—I trust I ever shall speak—in their presence, in no sycophantic tone, in the discharge of my duty. But now, in your presence, not for them, but for you to hear, it is but plain truth to say there is a deep feeling for you among them.

In these latter times a convulsion has shaken Europe, before which many a strong man's house built upon the sand has gone down. There has been a sifting of the nations; and every thing that had not the basis of reality to rest on has been shattered into shivers. Through all that terrible trial our own country has stood secure. The waves of revolution that thundered on distant shores were only a feeble murmur here. The reason, politically speaking, of the difference is, that the upper classes in this country have hitherto been the leaders in reform. There are two ways in which alteration may be effected. If it be done gradually from above, it is a reformation; if suddenly from below, it is a revolution. If the higher do the work God has given them to do, of elevating those below, you have a country working out her own national life securely; if, on the other hand, those below either tear down wantonly, or by the selfishness and blindness of those above are *compelled* to tear down such as are socially their superiors, then there comes a crisis which no country ever yet has passed through without verging upon ruin.

England's reforms hitherto have begun from above. There was a time when the barons of this country, sword in hand, wrung from the most profligate of our monarchs the Great Charter of English liberties. That charter imparted a portion of the freedom it won to the boroughs and the tenants, mediately and immediately holding from the Crown. When the insincere Charles I. came to the throne, who stood foremost in the resistance to the exaction of ship-money? An English gentleman by the side of an English peer. When his infatuated successor, with the blind arbitrariness of his race, untaught by all experience, began that system which ended in the expulsion of his family, the blood of freedom which flowed upon the scaffold was the blood of an English nobleman. When that great measure passed which gave so large an extension of the franchise, it was proposed by a nobleman in his place, with a voice choked with emotion, produced by the magnitude of the change he was effecting. Come down to our own times. Who have busied themselves in insuring for the laboring man better ventilation, personal and domestic cleanliness? Who are they that, session after session, fought the battle of the working-man to abridge his hours of labor? Who, after long and patient investigation, brought before the country the hideous particulars of women laboring harnessed in the mines, and children young in years but gray-headed in depravity? A band of English gentlemen, at the head of whom was one who has surrounded the name of Ashley with a glory, in comparison with which the concentrated lustre of all the coronets and crowns in Europe is a tinselled gewgaw, and which will burn brightly when they have passed into nothingness.

Another instance still. Suffer me to remind you of the history of your own institute. At the beginning of this year, a person of this town, afflicted with a severe malady, fixed his thoughts on this question, how he should do good to the working-classes of Brighton. You may understand much of a man's real interest in a subject by observing the direction that his thoughts take when they are left to act spontaneously. A man who forces himself to think upon a generous topic does well; but a man whose thoughts turn to it of their own accord, when all coercion is taken off, loves that cause in reality. It was my privilege to visit this person during his illness, in my pastoral capacity, as a member of my own congregation. I found one thought uppermost in his mind, "How shall I do good to the working-classes?" And that which was at first merely dim and vague took form and shape at last. It grew, till it became a living thing; and whatever interest there may be in the crowded room now before us, whatever may be the result of this movement in your own intellectual elevation, whatever may be the future effects of it upon the minds of the men of Brighton, is all owing to the energy of one Christian philanthropist, who excogitated his idea in the midst of solitude, and matured it in torture. And that man is of a class above your own.

You have asked for sympathy. I say that you have it. I say not that the higher classes of this country have altogether understood the high destinies which they are called on to fulfill. I say not that they all, or any of them, do what they might. To say that would be to say what has been true of no country. There *are* nobles who see in their rank nothing of a higher call than that which gives them a miserable leadership in the world of fashion. There *are* land-owners who see in the possession of their land nothing more divine than the means of wringing rents from their tenants, and furnishing covert for their game. There *are* wealthy persons who speak of the workman as if he were of a different order of beings from themselves. The day is fast coming when they will find that their whole life has been a lie. After that the longer night is near, which will shroud all such in the darkness of all good men's scorn. But it is false to history—false to experience—false to fact, to give this as the general description of the upper classes of this country.

We pass to the last thing on which I have to speak to you. There is an expression in this paper of a hope "bright in the hearts of the laboring men that better times are coming." The heart of every one responds to that. Who can look on this entangled web of human affairs in which evil struggles with good, good gradually and slowly disengaging itself, without having a hope within him that there are better times to come? Who can see this evil world full of envy and injustice, and be content to believe that things will remain as they are, even to the end? Who can see the brilliancy of character already attained by individuals of our race, without feeling that there is a pledge in this that what has been done already in the individual will yet be accomplished in the nation and in the race?

If I did not respond with all my soul to that, I would close the Bible to-morrow. For from first to last the Bible tells of better times. It came to our first parents and spoke of the serpent Evil crushed, not without suffering, under the foot of man. It came to the Israelite, mourning under political degradation, and consoled him by the vision of a time in which kings shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment. It came to true, brave men, who groaned over the hollowness and hypocrisy of all around them, the false glare and brilliancy which surrounded the great bad man, and told of the day when the vile man should be no longer called liberal, nor the churl bounteous. It spoke in the clearer language of New Testament promise of this actual world becoming a kingdom of peace and purity, of justice, brotherhood, and liberty. It irradiated the last moments of the first martyr with a vision of the Just One at the right hand of power.

Now suffer me to interpret for you the expression of "better times." If I understand you, you do not mean by "better times," times in which there shall be a general scramble for property; you do not mean the time when there shall be obliteration of all distinctions, no degradations for the worthless, no prizes for the best. You do not expect a time in which government shall so interfere to regulate labor that the idle and the industrious workman shall be placed upon a par, and that the man who is able to think out by his brain the thought which is true and beautiful, shall not be able to rise above the man who is scarcely above the level of the brute. Those would not be better times. They would be the return of the bad, old times of false coercion and brute force.

But if I understand you aright, you expect a time when *merit shall find its level*; when all falsehoods and hypocrisies shall be consigned to contempt, and all imbecility degraded and deposed; when worth shall receive its true meaning, when it shall be interpreted by what a man is and not by what he has, nor by what his relations have been. You want the restitution of all things to reality. Those are better times.

Now, then, let us look at our England. Has she any part in these better times? They tell us that England's day is past. I have heard foreign philosphers dissect our political state, and, with cold-blooded triumph, by all the precedents of the past, anticipate our approaching fall. It may be so. In the history of the past, in the relics and ruins around us, there are the solemn monuments of nations once great that are now nothing. The land of the Pharaohs is in decay; its population is now diminishing, and the sand of the desert daily silting up the temples of her former magnificence; Rome is broken into fragments; Jerusalem's last sob is hushed. Spain once had an empire on which the sun never set, because the moment he set on her possessions in the east, he rose on her possessions in the west. Spain lies now in her hopeless struggle like the blackened hull of a vessel that has been lightning-struck, rolling and heaving helplessly as the ocean wills. Genoa, Venice, Holland, once had an Eastern traffic. Upon them the same law of decay has passed, and the weed rots on the side of palaces that are now the abode of paupers.



It may be that such a destiny is in store for England. But one thing is certain, that the decay of morals in all these cases preceded the decay of institutions. The inward ruin preceded the political. So long as there was inward strength of constitution, so long intestine commotions were thrown off easily to the surface; so long as the nation was united in itself, so long were the attacks of enemies thrown off like the waves from the rock. To borrow a Scripture metaphor, if there were heard in the political heavens of a devoted nation or a devoted city the shrill shriek of the judgment eagles plunging for their prey, it was not till moral corruption had reduced the body of the nation to a carcass. Where the *body* was the eagles were gathered together. Looking to our beloved country, we see nothing of that kind. Her moral character seems yet sound. Healthy feeling is among us. A few weeks ago I stood in the lower room of this building, anxious to be a witness of the spirit in which you were conducting your undertaking. The speakers that evening, with one or two exceptions, were all working-men. I heard, not eloquence, but something far better—straightforward, honest, English, manly common sense. A high moral tone pervaded all that was said. I heard vice decried. I heard lounging, drinking, smoking, all the evils that ruin the health and character of the artisan, sternly condemned. I trust that it did my heart good. And I hesitate not to say that I left that room with feelings enlarged in sympathy. I trod through the dark streets that evening with a more elastic step and a lighter heart; I felt a distincter hope for this country—I felt proud of belonging to a nation whose laboring men could hold such a tone as that. Through all England we see the same thing; increasing moral earnestness, a deeper purpose, a more fixed resolve. Even in our justice do we see the same healthy tone. Justice is no longer the weak, passionate outbreak of vindictive feeling against a criminal for the injury he has done; in the very moment of her worst insult England can hold the sword suspended, and refuse to strike until she has maturely weighed not only what is due to the majesty of offended law, but besides, how much to the frailty of an erring judgment.

A striking exhibition of that same tone we have in the character of our press. On the whole, the press is on the side of rectitude. There is a paper familiar to us all, which is the representative of English humor. It is dedicated to mirth and jollity; but it is a significant feature of our times, and I believe a new one, that the comic satire of a country, expressed in a periodical which tests a country's feeling because of its universal circulation, should be, on the whole, on the side of right. It takes the side of the oppressed; it is never bitter except against what at least seems unjust and insincere. It is rigidly correct in purity, distinctly saying in all this that England, even in her hour of mirth, is resolved to permit no encroachment on her moral tone.

Looking at all this, and seeing in the upper classes and the lower one strong feeling, one conviction that we have been too long two nations, one determination to become one, to burst the barriers that have kept us apart so long; looking at the exhibitions of high self-forgetfulness and sworn devotedness to duty, which from time to time are rising even out of the most luxurious and most voluptuous ranks, we have a right to hope that that which is working among us is not death, but life. Our national character is showing itself again in its ancient form—that strange character, so calm, so cold, so reserved outwardly, rising once again in its silent strength. The heart of England is waking to her work—that mighty heart which is so hard to rouse to strong emotion, but the pulses of which, when once roused, are like the ocean in its strength, sweeping all before it. This is not death. This is not decay. The sun of England's glory has not set. There is a bright, long day before her yet. There are better times coming.

## SECOND ADDRESS.\*

*Delivered to the Members of the Working-men's Institute, at the Town Hall, Brighton, on Thursday, April 18, 1850, on the Question of the Introduction of Skeptical Publications into their Library.*

BROTHER-MEN, MEMBERS OF THE WORKING-MEN'S INSTITUTE,—Two years have passed since I addressed you in this place. On that occasion I was here by your invitation ; on the present, you are here by mine. I have to explain the unprecedented step of summoning you to meet me here this evening. My account of it is this : I am personally compromised before the public by your proceedings. Unexpectedly on my part, you honored me with a request that I would deliver the opening address to your society. It was at a period when events which had recently taken place upon the Continent caused every large movement to be looked upon with suspicious eyes ; yet I did not think it right to hesitate for one moment in complying with your request. Such influence as my name could command I gladly gave you. I have not the vanity to say that that influence was great, or that my name had weight with many ; but it did weigh with some ; and support was given you by them in reliance upon my representations. To them, and to the public generally, I stand pledged for the character of your society. For good or evil, my name is inseparably linked with yours. Your success is my success, and your failure is my shame. This is my claim to be heard, or rather the ground on which rests my duty to address you ; and I ask your calm attention, not promising that every word I say will be acceptable to all ;

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\* As this pamphlet may fall into the hands of some who are unacquainted with the circumstances which gave rise to its publication, and as some principles are involved in it which have a wider range than belongs to a local institution, it may be well to preface it with so much information as may render it intelligible.

The Working-man's Institute was established in October, 1848. It was the belief of those who originated it, that a large class of persons were almost entirely destitute of any means of self-education by access to a library or periodical publications—a class still more limited in means than those for whom Athenæums and Mechanics' Institutes had been long established. A very small subscription, one penny a week, if only sufficient numbers would combine, was found to be large enough to provide such an association with the materials of mental and moral improvement ; and it was confidently hoped that subscriptions from the wealthier classes would enable them by degrees to accumulate a valuable library. Great eagerness was manifested by the working-classes when this project was made known. About 1300 members enrolled themselves at once. The peculiar feature of the association was, that the whole management virtually devolved upon this class alone, with the exception of one of a rank above them, the late Mr. Holtham, who gave up a large portion of his time to assisting in the organization of the society ; the object of this being to break down, if possible, that feeling of suspicion which exists in the minds of so many of the working-class, of a desire for interference and coercion on the part of those who come forward as their benefactors.

It was, of course, foreseen that the rock on which such a plan might be wrecked would be any successful effort to divert the funds and machinery of the Institute from its original intention to the purposes of a political party.

But in this case the withdrawal of all well-disposed persons would leave the Association to dwindle till it became extinct ; for its very existence depended upon numbers. The experiment, therefore, appeared to be a perfectly safe one, inasmuch as perversion of its purposes must inevitably be followed quickly by annihilation.

One fatal oversight (such at least it appears to the author of these pages) in the constitution of the society realized the foreseen danger. It had been justly held that

but I think I may promise that not a word shall drop from me which, on mature reflection, you will be able justly to call illiberal.

It may require, too, to be explained why this address is a public one, instead of being confined to the members of the Institute. Great publicity has been given to your late meetings by your own hand-bills, and by the press. I can not disguise from you the fact that much pain has been felt in Brighton in consequence of those proceedings. I can not hide from you that much attention has been directed towards you, and that our meeting of this evening is looked to with great anxiety. I can not conceal from you that sympathy has been much chilled, that the cause of the education of the working-classes has received a shock, and that the question of the desirableness of free institutions has become a matter with many of serious doubt. Therefore, as the scandal was public, I felt that the vindication must be public too. You asked me to stand by you at the hopeful beginning of your institution—I could not desert you in the moment of danger and the hour of your unpopularity. I am here once more to say publicly, that whatever errors there may have been in the working out of the details, I remain unaltered in the conviction that the broad principle on which your society commenced was a true one. I am here to identify myself in public again with you—to say that your cause is my cause, and your failure my failure. I am here to profess my unabated trust in the sound-heartedness and right feeling of the great majority of the working-men of the Brighton Institute.

One more thing remains to be accounted for. You will ask me why this meeting differs in form so evidently from your usual meetings. The chairman is not your president, not your vice-president, not even a member of your society. This is my reason. I am here to-night in a position quite peculiar—a position of peculiar delicacy, difficulty, and independence. I am not the organ or spokesman of any party. I do not mix myself with any of the personalities of the question. I have taken counsel of no one of either party; nor, indeed, have I asked any one's advice upon the matter. I am anxious that neither the president nor any section of the Institute should be pledged to my views. I asked no one to share the responsibility of summon-

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the working-men ought to have in their own hands the management of their own Society, lest the smallest suspicion should arise that there was any desire in those who were their benefactors to coerce or trammel them. Every attempt at interference was scrupulously avoided. All this was wise and just. But beyond this, not only was the domination of the upper classes made impossible, but even their assistance and advice excluded, by making honorary members incompetent to vote or act on committee; a mistake which originated in an over-scrupulous generosity on the part of one who suggested it; but fatal, because false in principle.

To have vested the power of unlimited control or rule in the richer classes, would have been a surrender of the very principle on which the plan rested. But to reject all co-operation and assistance from them, to receive their contributions and refuse their advice, was to create and foster a spirit, not of manly, but of jealous independence, and to produce in a new form that vicious state of relationship between class and class, which is at this day the worst evil in our social life—the repulsion of the classes of society from each other at all points except one, so as to leave them touching at the single point of pecuniary interest. And thus the cementing principle of society is declared to be the spirit of selfishness—the only spirit which is essentially destructive. A fatal blunder!

When it is reckoned the duty of one class to give money, and the duty of another to suspect motives, the cordial sympathy of classes which really depend on another can not long continue. Not by mutual independence, but by mutual and trustful dependence, can men live together and society exist. As might have been expected, contributions fell off, and the more active and turbulent, unbalanced by a salutary check, became leaders in the society.

An attempt was made by a numerous minority to introduce into the library works of skeptical and socialist principles. The secretary resisted the attempt. A general meeting of the members was dissolved without coming to a decision. In this emergency the accompanying address was made, with the intention of meeting that attempt, if possible, by a candid and pacific examination of the principles of the question.

ing this meeting, or that of its result. Let all the blame, if blame there be, rest on me. On my single responsibility all is done. To make this evident to the public, with the entire and friendly concurrence of your president, Mr. Ricardo, I asked one to preside over us to-night, whose firmness, impartiality, and uprightness are so well known to his fellow-townsmen as to determine beforehand what the tone and character of this meeting are to be. This is not a lecture, but an address.

It is painful to be obliged to say any thing of self; yet, for several reasons, I feel compelled to say a few words respecting the spirit in which I desire to address you.

I do not pretend to dictate, nor shall I assume the tone of insulting condescension. I know that many whom I address to-night have minds of a strength and hardness originally greater than mine, though my advantages of education may have been superior. I am not about to try the power of priestcraft, nor to cajole or flatter you into the reception of my views. Let the working-men dismiss from their minds the idea, if it exists, of any assumption of a liberal tone for the purpose of winning them. If I speak sentiments free and liberal, it is not because they are adopted as opinions, but because they are bound up with every fibre of my being. I could as soon part with my nature and being, as cease to think and speak freely. Let them not fancy that such language is assumed, as fit for a platform before which *they* stand. There are those of your own number who will tell you that, in another place, from my own pulpit, not before workmen, but before their masters, before the rich and titled of this country, I have held and hold this same tone, and taught Christianity as the perfect law of liberty. They can tell you that it has cost me something, and that I have brought upon myself in consequence no small share of suspicion, misrepresentation, and personal dislike. I do not say this in bitterness; I hold it to be a duty to be liberal and generous, even to the illiberal and narrow-minded; and it seems to me a pitiful thing for any man to aspire to be true and to speak truth, and then to complain in astonishment that truth has not crowns to give, but thorns; but I say it in order that you and I may understand each other. Let the men of this association rest assured that they shall hear no cant from me. I am not before them even to preach the Gospel, but to meet them on broad, common ground, to speak to them as a man addressing his brother-men.

Again, my purpose to-night is not denunciation. If any man has come expecting to hear Socialism and Infidelity denounced, he will be disappointed. My firm conviction is, that denunciation does no good. Anathemas, whether thundered from church courts, from pulpits, or from platforms, are foolish and impotent. It is the principle of that Book, the spirit of which I desire for my guide throughout life, that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Let me explain why I refuse to denounce Infidelity.

I refuse to do so to-night, because it would be ungenerous. You have heard of a place called "Coward's Castle." Coward's Castle is that pulpit or that platform from which a man, surrounded by his friends, in the absence of his opponents, secure of applause and safe from a reply, denounces those who differ from him. I mean to invite no discussion to-night; and just because there can be no reply, if there were no better reason than that, there shall be no denunciation.

Your chairman has already told you that there is to be no debate; and I will explain to you why I have resolved on this. All topics are the fit subjects of free inquiry; but all are not the fit subjects of public discussion. And this, not because of any weakness in them, or uncertainty respecting their truth; but because of the very delicacy of the matter in question. There are some things too delicate and too sacred to be handled rudely with-

out injury to truth. Nothing is more certain than the duty of filial love; but if it were made a question for discussion in a school debating-club, I fancy the arrival at truth would be somewhat questionable. Exactly in proportion as a boy was good, tender, and affectionate, would he feel it difficult, rhetorically or logically, to defend his feelings; he would be conscious of a stammering tongue and a crimsoned cheek, and perhaps be overwhelmed with confusion. Nor would it require much talent or wit to make his position seem absurd—it would only require a copious flow of ribaldry. For you know the old proverb, that between the sublime and the ridiculous there is but a single step; and the more sacred a subject is, the more easy is it to give it an absurd aspect. It would be in the power of any bad boy to raise a laugh at the expense of one better and more manly than himself, by representing him as under the guidance of his mother's apron-string. In the very same way it would be easy enough to reduce the position of a religious man to one exquisitely ludicrous; loud, rude taunts of spiritual subjection, timidity, support by leading-strings, pointed with blasphemy and unscrupulous effrontery, would not demand much superiority of talent, but would effectually cover all chance of arriving at the truth with a cloud of dust. Therefore do I refuse to permit discussion this evening respecting the love which a Christian man bears to his Redeemer—a love more delicate far than the love which was ever borne to sister, or the adoration with which he regards his God, a reverence more sacred than man ever bore to mother. Therefore do I reject the infinite absurdity of a trial of such truth as the existence of a God by a show of hands.

Again, there shall be no denunciation, because infidelity is the vaguest of all charges. None is more freely, or more wantonly, or more cruelly hurled by man against man. Infidelity is often only the unmeaning accusation brought by timid persons, half conscious of the instability of their own belief, and furious against every one whose words make them tremble at their own insecurity. It is sometimes the cry of narrowness against an old truth under a new and more spiritual form. Sometimes it is the charge caught up at second-hand, and repeated as a kind of religious hue-and-cry, in profoundest ignorance of the opinions that are so characterized. Nothing is more melancholy than to listen to the wild, indiscriminate charges of Skepticism, Mysticism, Pantheism, Rationalism, Atheism, which are made by some of the weakest of mankind, who scarcely know the difference between Mesmerism and Mysticism. I hold it a Christian duty to abstain from this foolish and wicked system of labelling men with names; to stand aloof from every mob, religious or irreligious in name, which resembles that mob at Ephesus, who shouted for two long hours, the more part knowing not wherefore they were come together.

When the most spiritual minds of the sixteenth century protested against Rome, Protestantism was called infidelity. Eighteen centuries ago, the Christians were burned at the stake under the name of Atheists. The Athenians poisoned their noblest man as an Atheist. Only a few weeks ago, I saw one of the most precious works of one of the wisest of the Christian philosophers of England—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—denounced as the most pestilential work of our day, by one of those miserable publications, miscalled religious newspapers, whose unhallowed work it seems to be on earth to point out to its votaries whom they ought to suspect instead of whom they ought to love, and to sow the seeds of dissension, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness. Nay, I can not but remember that, in by-gone years, One whose whole life was one continued prayer, the sum and substance of whose teaching was love to God and love to man, was crucified by the bigots of his day as a Sabbath-breaker, a blasphemer, and a revolutionist. Therefore I refuse to thunder out indiscriminate anathemas to-night. Real infidelity is a fearful thing,

but I have learned to hold the mere *charge* of infidelity very cheap. And I earnestly would impress on all the duty of being cautious in the use of these charges. Give a man the name of Atheist, hint that he is verging upon infidelity, and the man is doomed; doomed as surely as the wretched animal which is pursued by the hue-and-cry of bad boys, and which, driven from street to street, maddened by the ceaseless rattle of the tin appended to him, expires at last, gasping, furious, amidst the shrieks of old women and the stonings of terrified passengers, who are all the more savage in proportion to their terror; for cowardice is always cruel.

Again, I abstain from denunciation, because not unfrequently even that which professes to be infidelity is disbelief, not of God, but of the character which men have given of God; opposition to the name of Christ, but not to the Spirit of Christ; hatred rather of the portrait by which his followers have represented him. I believe we should never forget that if infidelity be rife in this country, we who profess to be servants of God have much to answer for. Our bitterness, and superstition, and rancor, have been the representations of the spirit of Christianity from which men have recoiled. Dare we brand infidelity with hard names, as if we were guiltless?

Ever the lesson of history has been this—the recoil from formalism is skepticism; the reaction from superstition is infidelity. In the days of the Pharisees, the natural and inevitable recoil was Sadduceeism. In the 15th and 16th centuries, when Christianity itself had become form and magic, the result was the polished infidelity of the Papal Court of the tenth Leo. When Puritanism had bound men's consciences by a strictness more intolerable than that of Popery itself, substituted a Pharisaism of words for a Pharisaism of ceremonies, regulated the simplicities of human life by a rigorous proscription of all free-hearted mirth, and even restricted the dishes on the table to a religious number—the reaction was the light, skeptical licentiousness of the reign of Charles II. It is a fact worthy of deep pondering, to me a singularly startling one, that at the moment when we, the priests of England, were debating, as a matter of life and death, the precise amount of miracle said to be performed in a Christian sacrament, and excommunicating one another with reciprocated charges of heresy—the working-men of this country, who are not to be put off with transcendental hypotheses and mysterious phraseology, on whom the burdens of this existence press as fearful realities, were actually debating in *their* societies, here beneath this very roof, a far more awful question—whether there be indeed a God or not. It might suggest to one who thinks, a question not altogether calming in these days, what connection there is between these two things.

There is a special reason for saying all this. Among the list of books proposed by one party among you, and rejected by the other, I find "Queen Mab," by Shelley. Now Shelley's works, if objectionable, are objectionable on a very different ground from that on which many similar works should be condemned. In one sense Shelley was an infidel; in another sense he was not an infidel. I could read you passages from "Queen Mab" which every right-minded man would indignantly condemn; and I could read you others breathing a spirit of benevolence, and aspiration, and trust, and purity, which are as sublime as poetically beautiful. Of the first class I need scarcely say that I shall produce none; and of the second class I will only quote one:

For when the power of imparting good  
Is equal to the will, the human soul  
Requires no other heaven.

I do not ask for a more spirited or a more just idea of heaven. Compare it with words infallible—"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us;" "It is more blessed to give than to receive." I would that the anticipated

heaven of many who are called Christians were half as much purged of the idea of arbitrary rewards and happiness selfishness.

I could adduce numbers of such passages. The poem is full of them, steeped in a flood of earnest desire to see this earth regenerated and purified, and the spirit of man mingling with the Infinite Spirit of God.

How comes it, then, that one whose works breathe so much of the spirit of Christianity could blaspheme Christ? Alas! Christ had been miserably shown to Shelley. Poor, poor Shelley! All that he knew of Christianity was as a system of exclusion and bitterness, which was to drive him from his country; all that he knew of the God of the Bible was the picture of a bloody tyrant, gloating in blood, and making his horrible decree the measure of right and wrong, instead of right and wrong the ground of his decree. I say God had been so represented to Shelley; and if it be replied, "Shelley might have read his Bible to find that this was false," I reply, that chapter and verse were quoted by those who were supposed to know their Bible, in corroboration of their theories, and Shelley could not have read those passages but with preconceptions of their meaning. I grieve that I can not call Shelley a Christian. There are frantic ravings in this book which no Christian can justify; wild, vague music, as of an Æolian harp, inarticulate and unmeaning, breathed as a hymn to the Spirit of Nature, Intellectual Beauty, and so forth; maddest schemes and fastidious sensitivenesses respecting marriage, and man's granivorous nature; a fibre of insanity in his brain; yet I can not help feeling that there was a spirit in poor Shelley's mind which might have assimilated with the Spirit of his Redeemer—nay, which I will dare to say was kindred with that Spirit, if only his Redeemer had been differently imaged to him. Let who will denounce Shelley, I will not. I will not brand with Atheism the name of one whose life was one dream of enthusiastic, however impracticable, philanthropy. I will not say that a man who, by his opposition to God, means opposition to a demon, to whom the name of God in his mind is appended, is an enemy of God. To such a man I only reply, you are blaspheming a devil. That is not the God I adore. You are not my enemy. Change the name, and I will bid that *character* defiance with you.

Once more: I do not denounce, because the state of Atheism is too miserable for me to curse it. There is an infidelity with which no good man should have any sympathy. There are infidels who are such, knowing what they oppose. There are men who, in no mistake, know the difference between good and evil, and, distinctly knowing it, choose the evil and reject the good. But there is a state called infidelity which deserves compassion rather than indignation—the dreadful state of one who craves light and can not find it. I do think the way we treat that state is most unpardonably cruel. It is an awful moment when the soul begins to find that the props on which it has blindly rested so long are, many of them, rotten, and begins to suspect them all; when it begins to feel the nothingness of many of the traditionary opinions which have been received with implicit confidence, and in that horrible insecurity begins also to doubt whether there be any thing to believe at all. It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning, and seems shrivelled into a span; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit, when those who should have been his friends and counsellors only frown upon his misgivings, and profanely bid him stifle doubts, which for aught he knows may arise from the fountain of truth itself, to extinguish, as a glare from hell, that which for aught he knows may be light from heaven, and every thing seem wrapped in hideous uncertainty, I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scathless; it is by holding fast to those things which are cer-

tain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality. In the darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, yet, even then, it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward. Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who, in the tempestuous darkness of the soul, has dared to hold fast to these venerable landmarks. Thrice blessed is he who, when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him, and his friends shrink from him, has obstinately clung to moral good. Thrice blessed, because *his* night shall pass into clear, bright day.

I appeal to the recollection of any man who has passed through that hour of agony, and stood upon the rock at last, the surges stilled below him and the last cloud drifted from the sky above, with a faith, and hope, and trust, no longer traditional, but of his own, a trust which neither earth nor hell shall shake thenceforth forever. But it is not in this way generally that men act who are tempted by doubt. Generally, the step from doubt is a reckless plunge into sensuality. Then comes the darkening of the moral being; and then from uncertainty and skepticism it may be that the path lies unobstructed sheer down into Atheism. But if there be one on earth who deserves compassion, it is the sincere, earnest, and—may I say it without risk of being misunderstood—honest doubter? Let who will denounce him, I will not. I would stand by his side, and say, Courage, my brother! You are darkening your own soul; you are contradicting the meaning of your own existence. But God is your Father, and an Infinite Spirit seeks to mingle itself with yours.

I pass to the immediate question which has brought us together this evening.

The history of recent events is briefly this: About a fortnight ago certain books were introduced, or attempted to be introduced, into this Institution. They were objected to—I must say, rightly objected to, by a large majority of the members of the institution. Out of a society of eight hundred or nine hundred members, only one hundred and thirty-eight could be found to publicly advocate their reception. Now, in order to treat this matter fairly, I believe that the best way will be to endeavor to consider what are the principles on which their introduction is urged. Looking over these papers which have come before the public, I think I discern three grounds on which their proposal is defended—the Rights of Free Inquiry, the Rights of Liberty, and the Rights of Democracy. I am content to argue the question on those three grounds.

Let us first consider the Rights of Free Inquiry. It is said, and with some degree of truth, that the reason of man is the supreme judge of all things, and that God's existence can not be demonstrated to reason. I am quite ready to admit that, provided that we can first agree respecting the word "Reason." Very often a dispute arises from a mistake concerning words. In English, the word "Reason" has two meanings, and I do not know that I can find any two words that are exactly adapted to express those two meanings, which are included in one and the same word. But we will express them in this way. There is a soul, and there is a mind; the soul or heart is different from the mind, and the reason is different from the understanding.\* The understanding is that by which a man becomes a mere logician and a mere rhetorician; it is simply that by which he reasons from the impressions

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\* It is scarcely needful to remark, that this use of the two words in a special and technical sense, to denote a most important distinction between two things essentially different, is borrowed from Mr. Coleridge.



received through the senses. There is an understanding in the beaver, and there is an understanding in the bee, by which it builds its habitation. The fox has it as well, and there we call it cunning. They can and do reason; but they have not reason. There you see the ambiguity, the two meanings of the word. It is by this understanding that man knows what is profitable and what is unprofitable for him, by which he can shape his life with prudence. If you mean, in using the word reason, to say that understanding can not find out God, I am ready to agree with you.

There is an expression imputed to one of the members of the Working-man's Institute, which has been since denied; but it matters little whether it was rightly or mistakenly denied by the committee; it is this—that “if a man undertakes to prove the being of a God, he undertakes to prove too much.” I know not whether he said it or not. If he did not say it, I will say it for him. I can not *prove* the being of a God; if by proof I mean that addressed to the understanding. If I said I could, I should be guilty of the vilest Rationalism. I can not *prove* any one of the highest truths, except to the heart, the soul, the reason. I can not prove to any man that sweet is better than sour. I can not prove that good is better than evil to any man, unless there is a correspondence in his own being to the eternal difference between them. I can not prove to any man that there is a sun, unless he has an eye to see it. I can not prove that he is in a waking state, if he is in an illusion that he is in a dream. For even the proof I give, the impression my hand makes on his, is not that disputable? May not that proof be part of his dream? Has he not before now dreamed that he was awake? The fact is, that there are truths of sense addressed to the understanding; there are others, and they the highest, which are addressed to the reason. I will undertake to convict a man of idiocy, if he can not see the proof that three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. I will undertake to prove him fit for a lunatic asylum, if he refuses to receive the evidence that the earth goes round the sun. But if I place before a man an argument resting on miracles or on prophecy, or the proof from design, or any of the proofs addressed to the understanding, he may be neither an idiot nor insane, and yet unable to feel its force. An old French proverb says, that “grand thoughts come from the heart.” God must be felt by the heart, intuitively perceived by the reason, before he can be demonstrated to the understanding. If a man does not feel in every fibre of his heart a Divine Presence, I can not prove that it is there, or anywhere else. For the evidence of the senses can never be more certain than the convictions of the soul or reason.

There are men always talking of rights, and never of duties; I do not expect that they should believe in God, nor could I prove God to such. But let a man once feel the law of duty in his soul—let him feel within him as with the articulate distinctness of a living voice, the Absolute Imperative, “Thou shalt,” and “Thou shalt not”—let him feel that the only hell is the hell of doing wrong, and if that man does not believe a God, all history is false. Brother-men, the man who tries to discover a God outside of him instead of within, is doing just like him who endeavors to find out the place of the rainbow by hunting for it. The place of the rainbow depends upon your standing-point; and I say that the conviction of the being and character of a God depends upon your moral standing-point. To believe in God, is simply the most difficult thing in the world. You must be pure before you can believe in purity; generous, before you can believe in unselfishness. In all moral truth, what you are, that is the condition of your belief. Only to him in whom infinite aspirations stir can an Infinite One be proved.

Now once more we will try this on the principle of free inquiry. I find, on reading over the papers issued by the committee and their opponents, that one party objects to the refusal to admit these books, on the ground that it is

an attempt to crush free inquiry. Well, let there be free inquiry; let there be no attempt to stop free inquiry. There is no censorship of the press. We desire none. I would not, for £100,000 an hour, that there should be any restrictions placed on the publishing of books. I would far rather that there was much less of censorship of opinion. I know that millions of books, infidel and bad books, swarm out of the press; and yet I would not wish to see them stopped by force, except, of course, such as are shocking to public decency. Great as are the evils of unchecked license in publishing and reading, the evil of permitting any person or persons to restrict either authoritatively would be immeasurably greater. It is a part of the liberty of the country, part of the freedom we enjoy, part of the very peace and purity we have, that all these things are permitted to be matters of free inquiry. It is part of our moral discipline. I would not have that exotic virtue which is kept from the chill blast hidden from evil, without any permission to be exposed to temptation. That alone is virtue which has good placed before it and evil, and, seeing the evil, chooses the good.\*

But now, this loud cry about the bigotry of stopping free inquiry, let us consider it. What do the objectors to these books say? Inquire if you will; only inquire at home. If you will read books of socialism or infidelity, read them at home, do not bring them into our institution. Do not compel the Working-man's Institute to indorse these books of yours with its approbation. Is this bigotry? Is this an attempt to stop free inquiry?

Now let us try the matter on the principle of freedom. It seems to me that false notions respecting liberty are strangely common. People talk of liberty as if it meant the liberty of doing what a man *likes*. The only liberty that a man, worthy the name of a man, ought to ask for, is to have all restrictions, inward and outward, removed which prevent his doing what he *ought*. I call that man free who is master of his lower appetites, who is able to rule himself. I call him free who has his flesh in subjection to his spirit; who fears doing wrong, but who fears neither man nor devil besides. I think that man free who has learnt the most blessed of all truths, that liberty consists in obedience to the power and to the will and to the law that his higher soul reverences and approves. He is not free because he does what he likes, for in his better moments his soul protests against the act, and rejects the authority of the passion which commanded him, as an usurping force, and tyranny. He feels that he is a slave to his own unhallowed passions. But he is free when he does what he ought, because there is no protest in his soul against that submission.

Some people seem to think that there is no liberty in obedience. I tell you there is no liberty *except* in loyal obedience—the obedience of the unconstrained affections. Did you never see a mother kept at home, a kind of prisoner, by her sick child, obeying its every wish and caprice, passing the night sleepless? Will you call the mother a slave? Or is this obedience the obedience of slavery? I call it obedience of the highest liberty, the liberty of love.

We hear in these days a great deal respecting rights: the rights of private judgment, the rights of labor, the rights of property, and the rights of man. Rights are grand things, divine things in this world of God's; but the way in which we expound those rights, alas! seems to me to be the very incarnation of selfishness. I can see nothing very noble in a man who is forever going about calling for his own rights. Alas! alas! for the man who feels nothing more grand in this wondrous, divine world than his own rights!

Let me tell you a story respecting rights. Three thousand years ago, his-

\* See the well-known passage in Milton's noble work, the "Areopagitica," which was unconsciously in the mind when these words were spoken.

tory tells us of two men, the one a poor man, the other a rich man. The name of the poor man was David, the name of the rich man was Nabal. David had been expelled from his country unjustly, and in that emergency there was nothing left for him but to secure his independence by becoming chieftain over a band of disaffected men, who lived in those rude times irregularly enough, but whose wild proceedings he contrived partially to restrain. There was a custom in that country which gave to every such chieftain a right to levy a kind of compulsory wages, tax, or black mail, upon those shepherds and farmers whose property he had respected and defended from others more unscrupulous. It had grown up by a kind of tacit understanding; not precisely defined, and liable therefore to considerable abuse and uncertainty. David had made such a claim on Nabal, and Nabal considered it unreasonable, refused to accede to it, and added, besides, words of taunt, those bitter, contemptuous words, which the arrogant vulgar can use, who fancy that wealth and birth have entitled them to scorn plebeian claims; words which make the blood boil in men's veins; whereupon David girded on his sword in fury, and nothing but an abject apology from Nabal's wife could have prevented an appeal to arms, or, as you call it in these days, an appeal to physical force.

Brother-men, these were the Rights of Labor opposed to the Rights of Property. I can not see any thing noble in that. I can not see any thing manly in that ferocious struggle between rich and poor; the one striving to take as much, and the other to keep as much as he can. The cry of "My rights, your duties!" I think we might change to something nobler. If we could learn to say, "My duties, your rights," we should come to the same thing in the end; but the spirit would be different. That not very dignified feud between Nabal and David is only a picture of that which, hidden under fine names, men are calling now patriotism, public spirit, political martyrdom, protection, free trade—miserable enough, in my mind.

All we are gaining by this cry of rights, is the life of the wild beast and of the wild man of the desert, whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him. Nay, the very brutes, unless they had an instinct which respects rights even more strongly than it claims them, could never form any thing like a community. Did you never observe in a heronry or rookery, that the new-made nest is left in perfect confidence by the birds that build it? If the others had not learned to respect those private and sacred rights, but began to assert each his right to the sticks which are woven together there, I fancy it would be some time before you could get a heronry or a rookery!

Two thousand years ago there was One here on this earth who lived the grandest life that ever has been lived yet, a life that every thinking man, with deeper or shallower meaning, has agreed to call Divine. I read little respecting His rights or of His claims of rights; but I have read a great deal respecting His duties. Every act He did he called a duty. I read very little in that life respecting His rights; but I hear a vast deal respecting His wrongs—wrongs infinite—wrongs borne with a majestic, Godlike silence. His reward? His reward was the reward that God gives to all his true and noble ones—to be cast out in His day and generation, and a life-conferring death at last. Those were HIS rights!

This, then, is the way in which we desire to expound rights: my rights are, in truth, my duties; my rights are limited by another man's rights. For example, I have a perfect right to build a wall on my own estate. The language of the law is, that to whomsoever the soil belongs, is his all up to the skies. But within three yards of my wall is my neighbor's window. What becomes of the right that I was talking of? My right is limited; it is my duty, because limited by his right.

You have a right to read your books and to inquire and to examine for yourselves; but I put it to you, brother-men, have you a right to force into an institution shared by others books which are to them disgusting? Is that liberty?

There is one other principle on which the present arrangement of your affairs is defended. It is the rights of Democracy. I will now define Democracy. I know not whether the definition will be taken; but I will give it in the fair, and generous, and candid sense. I believe that in every thing held with earnestness by large bodies of men there is a certain amount of truth. Whether I hold democratic views or not, is not the question. I merely endeavor to expound the fair meaning of them. Now, Democracy, if it means any thing, means government by the people. It has for its very watch-word, Equality of all men. Now let us not endeavor to make it ridiculous. I suppose that a sensible democrat does not mean that all individual men are equal in intelligence and worth. He does not mean that the bushman or the Australian is equal to the Englishman. But he means this—that the original stuff of which all men are made is equal; that there is no reason why the Hottentot and the Australian may not be cultivated, so that in the lapse of centuries they may be equal to Englishmen. I suppose the democrat would say, there is no reason why the son of a cobbler should not by education become fit to be the prime-minister of the land, or take his place on the bench of judges. And I suppose that all free institutions mean this. I suppose they are meant to assert, Let the people be educated; let there be a fair field and no favor; let every man have a fair chance, and then the happiest condition of a nation would be, that when every man had been educated morally and intellectually to his very highest capacity, there should then be selected out of men so trained a government of the wisest and the best.

This is the principle of Democracy. I suppose no man will quarrel with this definition. It appears to me that you have departed from that principle. The principle of Democracy is this—that there is no essential difference between man and man; no reason why one class should be selected for privileges as, in its nature, necessarily superior to another class. I find in your book of rules a rule which entirely contradicts that; and it seems to me that it is a suicidal rule. It is this. You have a rule which prevents any one of your honorary, that is richer members, from having a vote or acting in committee. That is to say, you will neither have a Democracy nor an Aristocracy, but an Oligarchy. Not an open field for worth, nor a government by the best and wisest; but a government by a specified class. You will not permit the intelligence of others to guide or assist you. You cut yourselves off from all more highly educated minds. You not only say that the working-man, intellectually and originally, is on a level with others, but that he is absolutely superior. You deny equality. You will not permit a free, fair chance for a government of the wisest and best. You say the most ignorant must be the best and wisest. Is that Democracy? Brother-men, I hesitate not to say, that unless that rule be rescinded, and the whole thing be put on a different footing, this institution is lost. I know that this was done with the concurrence of your late lamented treasurer. It was not a rule which I felt could ever succeed or prosper; but, however, so long as his influence was with you, which you respected and revered, the injury was not felt, because he supplied the place of that intelligence from which you have cut yourselves off. But let that rule remain, live in the spirit of jealousy and suspicion, believe that the upper classes mean you ill, that in the great town of Brighton no man of any rank or wealth above your own can assist you with advice but he must do so from interested motives, and I can not see how this institution is to last at all.

I now wish to put before you two or three reasons why it seems to me that,

on grounds of fairness, these books ought to be rejected. The first reason is, that they are contrary to the very objects of your institution. I find in the address put forth by the committee to the members, these words: "We are only carrying out the objects of our institution and the wishes of its members, by affording mental amusement for all tastes of our supporters." I will not severely criticise that sentence, though it lies open to much criticism. I have a much more important work before me than the criticism of sentences. I am willing to admit that it is loosely expressed, and I do not wish to take advantage of an incorrect expression. There are members of this institution little above twelve or thirteen years of age; and if I wanted to turn it into ridicule, I might ask the committee whether they meant to say, in stating that principle, that they consider themselves bound to furnish books level to the capacity of children of thirteen years of age? There are persons among you, I fear it must be said, of licentious feelings; I am sure the members of the committee will not say they are bound to furnish mental amusement fitted to the taste of such persons. Yet if they mean any thing, they must mean this—that if there be in the society a large body of working-men who hold certain views and opinions, it is their bounden duty to provide intellectual food suited to each of such classes. For example: take the books objected to, and if there be a man who has a taste for socialism, it is then their duty to provide such books as Robert Owen's works; or, if there be a taste for infidelity, it is their bounden duty to furnish the works of Tom Paine; or, if a man descends in taste to a lower depth still, if he can revel in such works as the "Mysteries of London," it is the bounden duty of the committee to furnish him with books of that character. Admit that principle, and your society is shattered into fragments.

Let there be a change of expression. The true way of stating the principle is this: not that it is their bounden duty to furnish mental food for all tastes, but that it is their duty to furnish books adapted for the tastes of all their supporters. There is an immense difference. If you lay down this principle, that they are bound to furnish books adapted to all tastes of supporters, then every taste must be represented. But if you say they are to furnish books for the tastes of all supporters, then they are bound to furnish those which shall meet the wishes of all and be disagreeable to none, such as shall be suited to those tastes which are common to all. Let me give you a parallel case. In the higher classes of society, men of different ranks and attainments, and very various tastes, unite to form a society similar to yours. The clergyman, the medical man, and the lawyer, ladies and antiquaries, all join and form a lending library, book society, or whatsoever it may be called. Now it is plainly the duty of their committee to provide works which they may all read in common. There are certain tastes and principles in which they all agree. There is a large variety of books which meet all their tastes. This is the very principle of their union in a society. It is for this they have met and clubbed their money together. They perceive that they have certain tastes in common, and they combine, in order that they may be able to read more books than they could by buying them singly and separately. This is the principle.

Now suppose, instead of that, the committee were to resolve that there must be a shelf of divinity and a shelf of chemistry, for clergymen and medical men, and another shelf of black-letter books for antiquarians, and you will at once observe that the whole meaning of a society such as this is lost. The medical man and the clergyman join the general society to read books of general and not of special interest. If the clergyman wishes for his book of theology, and the medical man his medical authority, the one must form a clerical library, and the other must form his medical society. But in that case he must be content with limited numbers and limited means, exactly in

proportion as the object of association becomes limited and definite. Precisely so with this society. I do not say that the members of this Institute have not a perfect right to form unions among themselves; but once give utterance to this principle—that it is the duty of the committee to furnish food for all tastes, then you will have, not a society, but societies, not an institution, but a knot of clubs.

I call your attention to another point. In this paper your committee hold it to be their duty to afford mental amusement for all tastes. Again I say, I will not rigorously press the exact meaning of words. It is a duty always to endeavor to ascertain what men mean, instead of ungenerously binding them by their words, which are often inexact. And, indeed, on looking at the titles of these books “of amusement,” I find that some are any thing but amusing, but are books which require great exercise of intellectual faculties. But still some remark must be made on this idea of works of *amusement*. It is the duty of the committee, in *part*, to furnish books of amusement. I said so in my opening address. I was greatly sneered at for saying so. Many well-meaning and religious persons said I had forgotten my place as a clergyman in speaking of works of fiction as fit for laboring-men. They were shocked and startled that I dared to reckon it a matter of rejoicing that there is a moral tone in that well-known publication which is dedicated to wit and humor, or that I even named it. They were scandalized that I could find any thing of moral significance in the works of Dickens. I stand to what I said. I do not like to characterize that kind of language severely; otherwise I should call it cant. It exhibits a marvellous ignorance of the realities and the manifoldness of human life. I am prepared to say that works of fiction and amusement must and will be read, and that they ought to be read. There is a deal of religion in an earnest, hearty laugh that comes ringing from the heart. That man is a bad man who has not within him the power of a hearty laugh. Therefore it can not be denied that it is *part* of the duty of the committee to furnish works of amusement; but I can not but acknowledge that it is a matter of surprise and regret that, even by an oversight, the committee should have represented it as their duty *chiefly* to furnish works of mere mental amusement. Your rule declares that “the objects of this Institution are to provide means for the moral and intellectual *improvement* of its members.” What has become of that high moral tone which characterized your first addresses to the public? Where are the men from whom I have heard, in the room below, language which did my heart good, and made me feel proud of my country, which made me compare it triumphantly with the language that men of the working-classes were holding on the other side of the water? Men of the Brighton Working-man’s Institute! how comes it that the language of your publications now is so immeasurably inferior in moral tone?

Once more, you owe it to the cause in which your society is enlisted to reject peremptorily these infidel publications.

Every man, if he is not deterred by feeling for his own character, is deterred by feeling for his cause. There are many things that a soldier will do in his plain clothes which he scorns to do in his uniform. You have a cause, and I must acknowledge that the cause has received a severe blow by the proceedings of your last public meeting. I must admit, as I said before, that free institutions are looked upon now with eyes of jealousy and suspicion by many who lately felt towards them very favorably. I have heard again and again this taunt, “These are your friends, the working-men; this comes of your philanthropy.” And others, in a less bitter spirit, have said, “I fear you will be disappointed in your hopes of these working-men.” My friends, the working-men! Would to God they were my friends. Would to God I were more their friend. I look back once more two thousand years, and

dare not forget Who it was that was born into this world the Son of a poor woman, and probably labored for thirty years in a carpenter's shop, a *working-man!*

In reply to that sarcasm, I observe, it is to be remembered that the first use a man makes of every power and talent given to him is a bad use. The first time a man ever uses a flail, it is to the injury of his own head and of those who stand around him. The first time a child has a sharp-edged tool in his hand, he cuts his finger. But this is no reason why he should not be ever taught to use a knife. The first use a man makes of his affections, is to sensualize his spirit. Yet he can not be ennobled, except through those very affections. The first time a kingdom is put in possession of liberty, the result is anarchy. The first time a man is put in possession of intellectual knowledge, he is conscious of the approaches of skeptical feeling. But that is no proof that liberty is bad, or that instruction should not be given. There is a moment in the ripening of the fruit when it is more austere and acid than in any other. It is not the moment of greenness, it is the moment when it is becoming red, the transition state, when it is passing from sourness into sweetness. It is a law of our humanity, that man must know both good and evil; he must know good *through* evil. There never was a principle but what triumphed through much evil; no man ever progressed to greatness and goodness but through great mistakes.

There have been great mistakes made in this society, and there are many difficulties; but you will weather the difficulties yet. The mistakes will become your experience. Nay, I believe that the discipline of character which many of you will have gained by this struggle with an evil principle, and the practical insight which it has given you into the true bearing of many social questions, in which I personally know that wild and captivating theories have been modified in your minds by this recent experience, will be invaluable. If only this had been gained, I believe the institution would not have been established in vain. But if men say that all these difficulties tell against inquiry and education, I can only say that it proves we want more education. If I wanted a proof of that, I should find it in this—that the working-men of Brighton have not yet got beyond Tom Paine.

This, then, brother-men, is the reply to the taunts that have been made use of. But still I am bound to acknowledge this—and I do it with shame and sorrow—that there has been a handle put, by some of yourselves, into the hand of the bigot and the timid man. What, then, is all that the tyrants of the past have said, true; and all that the philanthropists have said, false? Were all their gloomy predictions sagaciously prophetic? What have the tyrant, the bigot, and the timid said? That it is impossible to give power to the people without making them revolutionary, or to give them instruction without making them infidel. You owe it to yourselves and to your cause to cast the imputation from you. And if Infidelity presumes to lay her hand upon the ark of your magnificent and awful cause, the cause of the people's liberty, and men say that it is part and parcel of the system, give that slander to the winds, and prove, men of Brighton, by the rejection of these books, and by the reorganization of your society, that the cause of instruction and the cause of freedom are not the cause of infidelity.

## TWO LECTURES ON THE INFLUENCE OF POETRY ON THE WORKING-CLASSES.

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### LECTURE I.\*

*Delivered before the Members of the Mechanics' Institution, February, 1852.*

THE selection of the subject of this evening's Lecture, "The Influence of Poetry on the Working-classes," requires some explanation. What has poetry to do with the working-classes? What has it, in fact, to do with this age at all? Does it not belong to the ages past, so that the mere mention of it now is an anachronism—something out of date? Now there is a large class of persons to whom all that belongs to our political and social existence seems of such absorbing interest, that they look with impatience on any thing which does not bear directly on it. A great political authority of the present day has counselled the young men of this country, and especially of the working-classes, not to waste their time on literature, but to read the newspapers, which, he says, will give them all the education that is essential. Persons of this class seem to fancy that the all-in-all of man is "to get on;" according to them, to elevate men means, chiefly, to improve their circumstances; and, no doubt, they would look with infinite contempt on any effort such as this, to interest men on subjects which, most assuredly, will not give them cheaper food or higher wages. "Lecture them," they will say, "on the principles of political economy, in order to stem, if possible, the torrent of those dangerous opinions that threaten the whole fabric of society. Give them, if you will, lectures on science, on chemistry, on mechanics, on any subject which bears on real and actual life; but, really, in this work-day age, rhyming is out of place and out of date. We have no time for poetry and prettiness." If, indeed, to have enough to eat and enough to drink were the whole of man—if the highest life consisted in what our American brethren call "going ahead"—if the highest ambition for working-men were the triumph of some political faction, then, assuredly, the discussion of our present subject would be waste of breath and time.

But it appears to me that, in this age of mechanics and political economy, when every heart seems "dry as summer dust," what we want is, not so much, not half so much, light for the intellect, as dew upon the heart; time and leisure to cultivate the spirit that is within us. The author of "Philip Van Artevelde," in his last published volume, "The Eve of the Conquest," has well described this our state of high physical civilization and refinement, in which knowledge is mistaken for wisdom, and all that belongs to man's physical comfort and temporal happiness is sedulously cared for, while much

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\* As some of the topics contained in the following lectures might seem out of place, as addressed to the members of a Mechanics' Institution, it may be well to state that they were delivered before a mixed audience. They are printed, with some additions, from the corrected notes of a short-hand reporter.



that belongs to our finer and purer being is neglected—an age of grim earnestness—not the noble earnestness of stern Puritanism for high principles, but one which is terrible only when the purse is touched.

Oh, England! “Merry England,” styled of yore!  
Where is thy mirth? Thy jocund laughter where?  
The sweat of labor on the brow of care  
Makes a mute answer: driven from every door.  
The May-pole cheers the village-green no more,  
Nor harvest-home, nor Christmas mummers rare,  
The tired mechanic at his lecture sighs,  
And of the learned, which, with all his lore,  
Has leisure to be wise?

Whatever objection may deservedly belong to this lecture, I hope that no “tired mechanic” will sigh over its tediousness or solemnity. I believe that recreation is a holy necessity of man’s nature; and it seems to me by no means unworthy of a sacred calling to bestow an hour on the attempt to impart not unproductive recreation to working-men.

There are some other objections, however, connected with the subject which must be noticed. Poetry may be a fitting study for men of leisure, but it seems out of the question for working-men—a luxury for the rich, but to attempt to interest the poor in it, is as much out of place as to introduce them into a cabinet of curiosities or a gallery of pictures. I believe such a feeling has arisen partly from this cause—that the poetry of the last age was eminently artificial, unnatural, and aristocratic; it reflected the outer life of modern society and its manners, which are conventional, uniform, polished, and therefore unnatural, and not of general human interest. I will read to you a description of that which one of the poets of that age thought to be the legitimate call and mission of the poet. Thus writes Pope: “Poetry and criticism are by no means the universal concern of the world, but only the affair of idle men who write in their closets, and of idle men who read there. \* \* \*

“All the advantages I can think of, accruing from a genius for poetry, are the agreeable power of self-amusement, when a man is idle or alone, the privilege of being admitted into the best company, and the freedom of saying as many careless things as other people without being so severely remarked on.”

You will scarcely wonder that when a poet could thus write of his art, working-men and real men, who have no time for prettinesses, and have not the privilege of being “admitted into the best company,” should be indifferent to poetry, and that it should have come to be reckoned among the luxuries of the wealthy and idle; nor will you be surprised that one who thought so meanly of his high work and duty, should never, with all his splendid talents, have attained to any thing in poetry beyond the second rank—that in which thought and memory predominate over imagination, and in which the heart is second to the head; for much of Pope’s poetry is nothing more than ethical thoughts tersely and beautifully expressed in rhyme.

There is another reason, however, for this misconception. The poetry of the present age is, to a great extent, touched, tainted if you will, with mysticism. Let us trace the history of this.

A vigorous protest was made at last against the formalism of the poetry of the last century. The reaction began with Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron, and the age of conventional Poetry was succeeded by the poetry of sentiment and passion. But, by degrees, this wave also spent itself; and another came. Wordsworth was the poet of the few; the border minstrelsy of Scott exhausted itself even during his own life; and when that long, passionate wail of Byronism had died away—a phase of tempestuous feeling through which every man, I suppose, passes in one portion or other of his existence—men began to feel that this life of ours was meant for something higher than for a man to

sit down to rave and curse his destiny; that it is at least manlier, if it be bad, to make the best of it, and do what may be done. Next came, therefore, an age whose motto was "work." But now, by degrees, we are beginning to feel that even work is not all our being needs; and, therefore, has been born what I have called the Poetry of Mysticism. For just as the reaction from the age of Formalism was the Poetry of Passion, so the reaction from the age of science is, and I suppose ever will be, the Poetry of Mysticism. For men who have felt a want which work can not altogether satisfy, and have become conscious that the clear formulas and accurate technicalities of science have not expressed, nor ever can, the truths of the soul, find a refuge in that vagueness and undefined sense of mystery which broods over the shapeless borders of the illimitable. And thus the very mystic obscurity of thought and expression which belongs to Browning, Tennyson, and even Wordsworth, is a necessary phase in the history of poetry, and is but a protest and witness for the infinite in the soul of man.

For these two reasons, that the poetry of the past age was conventional and that of the present mystical, it was very natural that poetry should have come to be reckoned merely an amusement, suited to men of leisure. But it was not always so: poetry began, not in the most highly civilized, but in the half-civilized stages of society. The drama, for example, was first acted in wagons drawn through the Grecian villages, and performed by men who only half-concealed their personality by the rude expedient of smearing the face with the lees of wine. And, before that, the poems of Homer had been recited with enthusiasm in the villages and cities of Ionia by the people. The poems of Burns, himself a peasant, are the darling favorites of the Scottish peasant, and lie with his Bible on the same shelf.

And where did our own English poetry begin, but in those popular ballads of which you have a notable example in the epic ballad of "Chevy Chase?" Poetry is essentially of the people, and for the people.

However, it will be granted, perhaps, that the love of poetry is compatible with an incomplete education; but hardly with a want of leisure, or with hard work. To this I reply, first, by a matter of fact: the works of poetry in this institution, since the loss of its first large library, are few; but those few are largely read. Upon the librarian constant demands are made for the works of Shakspeare and Sir Walter Scott.

I reply, secondly: I know something myself of hard work; I know what it is to have had to toil when the brain was throbbing, the mind incapable of originating a thought, and the body worn and sore with exhaustion; and I know what it is in such an hour, instead of having recourse to those gross stimulants to which all worn men, both of the higher and lower classes, are tempted, to take down my Sophocles or my Plato (for Plato was a poet), my Goethe, or my Dante, Shakspeare, Shelley, Wordsworth, or Tennyson; and I know what it is to feel the jar of nerve gradually cease, and the darkness in which all life had robbed itself to the imagination become light, discord pass into harmony, and physical exhaustion rise by degrees into a consciousness of power. I can not, and I will not, believe that this is a luxury, or rather a blessed privilege, reserved for me, or my class, or caste, alone. If I know from personal experience—and I do know—that feelings such as these, call them romantic if you will, can keep a man all his youth through, before a higher Faith has been called into being, from every species of vicious and low indulgence, in every shape and every form—if I believe that there are thousands

Whose hearts the holy forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,

I am compelled also to believe that, as that which is human belongs to all humanity, so there is power in this pursuit to enable the man of labor to rise

sometimes out of his dull, dry, hard toil, and dreary routine of daily life, into forgetfulness of his state, to breathe a higher and serener and purer atmosphere. I *will* believe that for him, too, there is an

Appeal to that imaginative power,  
Which can commute a sentence of sore pain  
For one of softer sadness.

Some years ago an Irishman, scarcely above a peasant in rank, was employed on the Ordnance Survey, under an officer of engineers, in Suffolk, where I then was. I remember the description he gave me of the state of the Irish peasantry, and the scenes of wretchedness I had not then witnessed: "Their cabins, your honor," said he, "are in such a state sometimes, that the poor cratures could count the stars as they lay on their beds."

I am not prepared to dispute that it might have been better for the Irish peasant if, instead of lying on his bed counting the stars and cursing the Saxon, he had got up and mended his roof; nor will I enter into the question whether seven hundred years of English misrule have darkened all hope in the nation's breast, and left them neither heart nor spirit to mend and patch a hopeless lot; but I think you will agree with me, that a hard-working man, to whose imagination the thought which spontaneously presented itself on the sight of a roofless hut, was, not that of dripping rain or driving winds, but of poor creatures lying on their beds to count the stars—who could get away from discomfort to expatiate in the skies—was, to some extent, through his imagination and his poetry, independent of external circumstances.

By the title of this lecture I am bound to define, in the first place, what is meant by "poetry;" and, in the second, to endeavor to sustain the assertion "that it has a powerful influence on the working-classes."

The former of these is the subject of this first lecture. Our first definition of poetry is—the natural language of excited feeling. When a man is under the influence of some strong emotion, his language, words, demeanor, become more elevated; he is twice the man he was. And not only his words, and posture, and looks, but the whole character and complexion of his thoughts are changed. They belong to a higher order of imagination, and are more full of symbolism and imagery; the reason of which is—that all the passions deal not with the limitations of time and space, but belong to a world which is infinite. The strong passions, whether good or bad, never calculate. Anger, for example, does not ask for satisfaction in gold and silver: it feels and resents a wrong that is infinite; Love demands the eternal blessedness of the thing loved; it feels, and delights to feel, that it is itself infinite, and can never end: Revenge is not satisfied with temporary pain, but imprecates the perdition of the offender.

And so these passions of ours, uncalculating, and outlaws of time and space, disdaining the bounds of the universe,

Glancing from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,

never argue, but reach at a single bound the eternal truth, discover unexpected analogies hidden before through all the universe, and subordinate each special case to some great and universal law.

Hence the language of strong emotion is always figurative, symbolical, and rich in metaphors. For the metaphors of poetry are not mere ornaments stuck on, and capable of being taken off without detriment to the essence of the thought. They are not what the clothes are to the body, but what the body is to the life—born without it; the form in which the life has been clothed, without which the life would have been impossible; just as Minerva is fabled by the ancients to have risen in full panoply out of the brain of Jupiter.

Poetry, I have said, is the *natural* language of excited feeling. It is not something invented or artificial, but that in which excited feeling naturally clothes itself. Now take an example. When the Pragmatic Sanction was violated on all sides in Europe, when Silesia had been wrested away by the young King of Prussia, and, with the assistance and sanction of the French, the Elector of Bavaria was aiming at the crown of the empire, the Empress, Maria Theresa, threw herself on her Hungarian subjects. We are told that when, robed in black, she appeared in the Diet, with her child in her arms, and asked their assistance, the Hungarian nobles rose, and with one voice exclaimed, "Let us die for our King, Maria Theresa!" Observe the poetry of the expression, "Our *King*, Maria Theresa." No calculation in that moment; no mercenary sordidness, balancing the question whether a nation could afford to defend weakness and honor at the expense of a costly war, or not. They had risen in one moment of strong emotion to the highest truth of human existence, the Law of Sacrifice; they had penetrated into that region in which kingly qualities had blended together the two sexes, and broken down the whole barrier of distinction between man and woman; that region in which tenderness and loyalty are not two, but one: "Let us die for our KING, Maria Theresa!"

You will perceive from this that there is an element of poetry in us all. Whatever wakes up intense sensibilities puts you for a moment into a poetic state; if not the creative state, that in which we can *make* poetry, at least the receptive state in which we *feel* poetry. Therefore, let no man think that, because he can not appreciate the verse of Milton or Wordsworth, there is no poetry in his soul; let him be assured that there is something within him which may any day awake, break through the crust of his selfishness, and redeem him from a low, mercenary, or sensual existence.

Any man who has for a single moment felt those emotions which are uncalculating, who has ever risked his life for the safety of another, or met some great emergency with unwavering courage, or felt his whole being shaken with mighty and unutterable indignation against some base cruelty or cowardly scoundrelism, knows what I mean when I say that there is something in him which is infinite, and which can transport him in a moment into the same atmosphere which the poet breathes.

"High instincts," Wordsworth calls them,

Before which our mortal nature  
Did tremble, like a guilty thing surprised:  
\* \* \* \* those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the Fountain-light of all our day,  
Are yet the master-light of all our seeing:  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the Eternal Silence. Truths that wake,  
To perish never.

Shakspeare, who knew all that man can feel, and the times when he feels it, is here, as usual, true to nature. You must have observed that he never puts language highly imaginative, what we call poetry, into the lips of any except exalted characters, who may be supposed to live in poetry, or persons who, for the time, are under some exciting influence. If you will compare the manner and expression of Timon of Athens, through the earlier acts, with his language in the latter part of the play, you will see how he becomes another man under the influence of a powerful passion. At first you have the high-born, high-bred gentleman, magnificent in his liberality and princely in his tastes, bestowing a fortune on a dependent whose poverty is the sole bar to a happy marriage, giving away the bay courser to his guest because he

admired it; the munificent patron of the arts, using the conventional language and the flat, dead politeness of polished society, with no strong feeling of life, because nothing has broken the smoothness of its current. But the shock comes. In temporary reverses he begins to feel the hollowness of friendship, suspects that men and women are not what they seem; and then, with that passionate scorn which henceforth marks his character, the real poetry of Timon's existence begins. And this is made the more remarkable by the relief in which his character stands out from the contrast between two misanthropes in the same play. One is the generous Timon, who has despaired of men because he has not found them what he expected them to be; the other the self-inclosed Apemantus, who believes in the meanness of all human natures because he is mean himself. Even when the two reciprocate abuse, the distinction is preserved. Apemantus is merely scurrilous—"beast" and "toad" are the epithets of his vocabulary. One pregnant word, alive with meaning, falls from Timon's lips—"Slave." And then, disappointed in his best and highest affections, the whole universe appears to his disordered imagination overspread with the guilt of his wrongs: earth and sky and sea are robbers; yet his scorn is lofty still; even gold, the general seducer, he does not curse with the low invective of the conventicle. Listen to the impassioned scerner:

Thou ever young, fresh, lov'd, and delicate wooer,  
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow  
That lies on Dian's lap! Thou visible god,  
That solder'st close impossibilities,  
And mak'st them kiss! That speak'st with every tongue  
To every purpose! O, thou touch of hearts!

It is poetry throughout—passion rendered imaginative; scorn, as contrasted with mere spite.

In saying, however, that poetry is the language of excited feeling, by excitement is not to be understood mere violence or vehemence, but intensity. It is with accurate knowledge of human nature that Philip Van Artevelde says to Sir Fleuréant, who is imploring forgiveness with vehement self-reproach: "Thou art a weak, inconstant, violent man." Weakness and violence often go together. Passion may be violent; as in the case of Othello, Lear, and Northumberland; it does not follow that it must; vehemence is simply dependent on physical organization, a mere matter of brain and nerve. Indeed, the most intense feeling is generally the most subdued and calm; for it is necessarily condensed by repression. A notable example you have in Wordsworth, the calmest of poets; so much so, that I have heard him characterized as a Quaker among poets. And yet he is the author of the sublimest ode in the English language—the "Intimations of Immortality" from the recollections of childhood. And for his *intensity*, I only appeal to those who have understood his poetry, felt, and loved it.

Yet even in this apparent exception we have a corroboration of the rule. Intense as Wordsworth is, there is in him something wanting for the very highest poetry. He is too calm. There is a want of passion; and hence an entire absence of epic as well as dramatic power; he reflects when he ought to describe, and describes feeling when he ought to exhibit its manifestation. He sings of our nature as some philosophic spirit might sing of it in passionless realms of contemplation, far away from the discords of actual existence, of a humanity purged and purified, separate from the fierce feelings and wild gusts of passion which agitate real human life. And therefore Wordsworth never can be popular in the true sense of the word. His works will be bought and bound richly, and a few of his poems will be familiar words; but still he will remain the poet of the few; acknowledged by the many, only because he is revered by the few—those discerning few whose verdict slowly but surely leads the world at last.

I have said that poetry is the natural language of intense feeling. It is in perfect accordance with this that the great master of all criticism, Aristotle, divides poetry into two orders. He says a poet must be one of two things—a “frenzied man” or an “accomplished man;” in which single sentence are contained whole volumes. There are two kinds of poets; the one inspired, and the other skillful; the one borne away by his own feelings, of which he is scarcely master; the other able rather to conceive feelings and simulate their expression, than possessed by, or possessing them.

Hence it is almost proverbial that the poetic temperament, except in a few cases of felicitously organized constitution and rare equilibrium of powers, is one of singular irritability of brain and nerve.

Even the placid Wordsworth says :

We poets in our youth begin with gladness;  
But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

And by this, too, we can understand and compassionate, I do not say excuse, the force of that temptation of stimulants to which so many gifted natures have fallen a sacrifice. Poetry is the language of excited feeling; properly of pure excitement. But stimulants, like wine, opium, and worse, can produce, or rather simulate, that state of rapturous and ecstatic feeling in which the seer should live; in which emotions succeed each other swiftly, and imagination works with preternatural power. Hence their seductive power.

Our higher feelings move our animal nature; and our animal nature, irritated, can call back a semblance of those emotions; but the whole difference between nobleness and baseness lies in the question whether feeling begins from below or above. The degradation of genius, like the sensualizing of passion, takes place when men hope to reproduce, through stimulus of the lower nature, those glorious sensations which it once experienced when vivified from above. Imagination ennobles appetites which in themselves are low, and spiritualizes acts which are else only animal. But the pleasures which *begin* in the senses only sensualize.

Burns and Coleridge are the awful beacons to all who feel intensely, and are tempted to rekindle the vestal flames of genius, when they burn low, with earthly fire.

I give another definition of poetry. I think I have seen it defined—I am not sure whether I have confounded my own thoughts with what I have a dim recollection of having somewhere read—as “the indirect expression of feelings that can not be expressed directly.” We all have feelings which we can not express. There is a world into which the poet introduces us, of which the senses are not the organs; there is a beauty which the eye has never seen, and a music which the ear has never heard. There are truths, eternally, essentially, and necessarily true, which we have never yet seen embodied. And there is, besides, from our human sympathies, a strong necessity for giving utterance to these cravings in us. For language has been given, not merely to make known our own selfish wants, but to impart ourselves to our fellow-men. Now if these intense feelings could be expressed directly, so that when you expressed them you felt yourself understood as adequately as when you say “I thirst,” or “I am hungry,” then there would be no poetry at all; but because this is impossible, the soul clothes her intuitions, her aspirations, and forebodings, in those indirect images which she borrows from the material world.

For this reason the earliest language of all nations is poetry. Language has been truly called fossil poetry; and just as we apply to domestic use slabs of marble, unconscious almost that they contain the petrifications of innumerable former lives, so in our every-day language we use the living poetry of the past, unconscious that our simplest expressions are the fossil forms of feeling

which once was vague, and labored to express itself in the indirect analogies of materialism. Only think from whence came such words as "attention," "understanding," "imagination."

As language becomes more forcible and adequate, and our feelings are conveyed, or supposed to be conveyed, entirely, poetry in words becomes more rare. It is then only the deeper and rarer feelings, as yet unexpressed, which occupy the poet. Science destroys poetry; until the heart bursts into mysticism, and out of science brings poetry again; asserting a wonder and a vague mystery of life and feeling, beneath and beyond all science, and proclaiming the wonderfulness and mystery of that which we seem most familiarly to understand.

I proceed to give you illustrations of this position, that "poetry is the indirect expression of that which can not be expressed directly." An American writer tells us that in a certain town in America there is a statue of a sleeping boy, which is said to produce a singular feeling of repose in all who gaze on it; and the history of that statue, he says, is this: The sculptor gazed upon the skies on a summer's morning, which had arisen as serene and calm as the blue eternity out of which it came; he went about haunted with the memory of that repose—it was a necessity to him to express it. Had he been a poet, he would have thrown it into words; a painter, it would have found expression on the canvas; had he been an architect, he would have given us his feelings embodied, as the builders of the Middle Ages embodied their aspirations, in a Gothic architecture: but being a sculptor, his pen was the chisel, his words stone, and so he threw his thoughts into the marble. Now observe, first, this was intense feeling longing to express itself; next, it was intense feeling expressing itself indirectly, direct utterance being denied it. It was not enough to say, "I feel repose;" infinitely more was to be said—more than any words could exhaust: the only material through which he could shape it, and give to airy nothing a body and a form, was the imperfectly expressive material of stone.

From this anecdote we may understand in what sense all the high arts, such as sculpture, painting, and poetry, have been called imitative arts. There was no resemblance between the sleeping boy and a calm morning; but there was a resemblance between the *feeling* produced by the morning and that produced by gazing on the statue. And it is this resemblance between the feeling conceived by the artist, and the feeling produced by his work, that the imitation of poetry or art lies. The fruit which we are told was painted by the ancient artist so well that the birds came and pecked at it, and the curtain painted by his rival so like reality that he himself was deceived by it, were imitative so far as clever deception imitates; but it was not high art, any more than the statue which many of you saw in the Exhibition last year was high art, which at a distance seemed covered with a veil, but on nearer approach turned out to be mere deceptive resemblance of the texture, cleverly executed in stone. This is not the poetry of art; it is only the imitation of one species of material in another species; whereas, poetry is the imitating, by suggestion through material and form, of feelings which are immaterial and formless.

Another instance. At Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, there is a Madonna, into which the old Catholic painter has tried to cast the religious conceptions of the Middle Ages, virgin purity and infinite repose. The look is upwards, the predominant color of the picture blue, which we know has in itself a strange power to lull and soothe. It is impossible to gaze on this picture without being conscious of a calming influence. During that period of the year in which the friends of the young men of Oxford come to visit their brothers and sons, and Blenheim becomes a place of favorite resort, I have stood aside near that picture to watch its effect on the

different gazers, and I have seen group after group of young undergraduates and ladies, full of life and noisy spirits, unconsciously stilled before it; the countenance relaxing into calmness, and the voice sinking to a whisper. The painter had spoken his message, and human beings, ages after, feel what he meant to say.

You may perhaps have seen in this town, some years ago, an engraving in the windows of the print-sellers, called the "Camel of the Desert." I can not say it was well executed. The engraving was coarse, and the drawing, in some points, false; yet it was full of poetry. The story tells itself. A caravan has passed through the desert; one of the number has been seized with dangerous illness, and as time is precious, he has been left to die, but as there is a chance of his recovery, his camel has been left beside him, and in order that it may not escape, the knee of the animal has been forcibly bent, the upper and lower bones tied together, and the camel couched on the ground incapable of rising. The sequel is that the man has died, and the camel is left to its inevitable doom. There is nothing to break the deep deathfulness of the scene. The desert extends to the horizon without interruption, the glowing heat being shown by the reflection of the sun from the sands in a broad band of light, just as it glows on the sea on a burning summer day.

Nothing, I said, breaks the deathfulness of the scene; there is only one thing that adds to it. A long line of vultures is seen in the distance, and one of these loathsome birds is hovering above the dead and the doomed: the camel bends back his neck to watch it, with an expression of terror and anguish almost human, and anticipates its doom. You can not look at the print without a vivid sense and conception of despair. You go through street after street before the impression ceases to haunt you. Had the plate been better executed, it is quite possible it might not have been so poetical. The very rudeness and vagueness of it leave much to the imagination. Had the plumage of the vulture or the hair of the camel more accurately copied the living texture, or the face of the corpse been more deathlike, so as, instead of kindling the imagination with the leading idea, to have drawn away the attention to the fidelity with which the accessories had been painted, the poetry would have been lessened. It is the effort to express a feeling, and the obstacles in the way of the expression, which together constitute the poetical.

Most of us visited the Exhibition in Hyde Park last year. Some may have seen between the central fountain and the Colebrook Dale gates several cases of stuffed birds, and probably passed on after a cursory glance. If so, it was a pity, for there was much poetry in those cases. They contained a series illustrative of falconry.\* In the first case was a gyr-falcon, hooded; in the second, the falcon has struck his quarry, and the heron lies below with ruffled crest and open beak, and writhing, serpentine neck, the falcon meanwhile fixing his talons deep, and throwing himself backwards with open wings to avoid the formidable beak. In the third, the falcon sits gorged upon its perch.

I have visited the finest museums in Europe, and spent many a long day in watching the habits of birds in the woods, hidden and unseen by them; but I never saw the reproduction of life till I saw these. It was not merely the exquisite arrangement of the feathers, nor merely that the parts which are usually dry and shrunk in preserved specimens, the beak and the orbits, the tongue and the legs, were preserved with a marvellous freshness; it was not the mere softness of every swell, and the graceful rise and bend wherever rise and bend should be, but it was the life and feeling thrown into the

\* Contributed to the Exhibition by Mr. Hancock, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.



whole, that dignified these works as real art. They were vitalized by the feeling not of the mere bird-stuffer, but of the poet, who had sympathized with nature, felt the life in birds as something kindred with his own; and, inspired with this sympathy, and laboring to utter it, had thus recreated life, as it were, within the very grasp of death.

And while on this subject, I may give you another illustration, by which you will perceive the difference between science and poetry, in the works, if you have ever time to read them, published in a cheap form, of Wilson, the American ornithologist. Wilson was born at Paisley; his first poetic inspiration came from the perusal of the works of his countryman, Burns. He emigrated to America, and there devoted his life to ornithology. He studied the life of birds in their native haunts, and the result was a work which stands among the foremost in its own department, and which one of the greatest ornithologists of the day, Prince Lucien Bonaparte, has felt it an honor to arrange scientifically. Wilson's enthusiasm and imaginative temperament are manifested in the singular wish that when he died he might be buried in the woods, where the birds would sing above his grave. And all his writing is full of this living sympathy with life, and poetic power of perceiving analogies: as when he calls the arctic owl "that great Northern hunter," or describes the goat-sucker's discovery of the robbery of her nest. Whoever has read his works, or "Waterton's Wanderings," or that sweet, observing description given by Banquo, in Macbeth, of the swallow's haunts and dispositions, and will compare the aspect in which life appeared to them with that in which it presents itself to the mind of the scientific nomenclator, will understand the different ways in which intellect and feeling represent the same objects, and how it is that largeness of sympathy distinguishes poetic sensibility from scientific capacity. Poetry creates life; science dissects death.

Our present definition will help to explain why all the scenes of nature are poetic and dear to us. They express what is in us, and what we can not express for ourselves. I love those passages in the Bible which speak of this universe as created by the WORD of God. For the Word is the expression of the thought; and the visible universe is the thought of the Eternal, uttered in a word or form in order that it might be intelligible to man. And for an open heart and a seeing eye it is impossible to gaze on this creation without feeling that there is a spirit at work, a living WORD endeavoring to make himself intelligible, *laboring* to express himself through symbolism and indirect expression, because direct utterance is impossible; partly on account of the inadequacy of the materials, and partly in consequence of the dullness of the heart, to which the infinite Love is speaking. And thus the word poet obtains its literal significance of maker, and all visible things become to us the chanted poem of the universe.

These feelings, of course, come upon us most vividly in what we call the sublime scenes of nature. I wish I could give to the working-men in this room one conception of what I have seen and witnessed, or bring the emotions of those glorious spots to the hearts of those who can not afford to see them. I wish I could describe one scene, which is passing before my memory this moment, when I found myself alone in a solitary valley of the Alps, without a guide, and a thunder-storm coming on; I wish I could explain how every circumstance combined to produce the same feeling, and ministered to unity of impression: the slow, wild wreathing of the vapors round the peaks, concealing their summits, and imparting in semblance their own motion, till each dark mountain form seemed to be mysterious and alive; the eagle-like plunge of the Lämmer-geier, the bearded vulture of the Alps; the rising of the flock of choughs, which I had surprised at their feast on carrion, with their red beaks and legs, and their wild, shrill cries, startling the

solitude and silence, till the blue lightning streamed at last, and the shattering thunder crashed as if the mountains must give way; and then came the feelings, which in their fullness man can feel but once in life—mingled sensations of awe and triumph, and defiance of danger, pride, rapture, contempt of pain, humbleness, and intense repose, as if all the strife and struggle of the elements were only uttering the unrest of man's bosom; so that in all such scenes there is a feeling of relief, and he is tempted to cry out exultingly, There! there! all this was in my heart, and it was never said out till now!

But do not fancy that poetry belongs to the grander scenes of nature only. The poets have taught us that throughout the whole world there is a significance as deep as that which belongs to the more startling forms through which Power speaks.

Burns will show you the poetry of the daisy,

Wee, modest, crimson-tippit flower,

which the plough turns up unmasked; and Tennyson will tell you the significance, and feeling, and meaning there are in the black ash-bud, and the crumpled poppy, and the twinkling laurels, and the lights which glitter on the panes of the gardener's green-house, and the moated grange, and the long, gray flats of "unpoetic" Lincolnshire. Read Wordsworth's "Nutting," and his fine analysis of the remorse experienced in early youth at the wanton tearing down of branches, as if the desolation on which the blue sky looks reproachfully through the open space where foliage was before were a crime against life, and you will feel the intuitive truth of his admonition that "there is a Spirit in the woods."

Nay, even round this Brighton of ours, treeless and prosaic as people call it, there are materials enough for poetry, for the heart that is not petrified in conventional maxims about beauty; enough in its free downs, which are ever changing their distance and their shape, as the lights and cloud-shadows sail over them, and over the graceful forms of whose endless variety of slopes the eye wanders, unarrested by abruptness, with an entrancing feeling of fullness, and a restful satisfaction to the pure sense of Form; and enough upon our own sea-shore and in our rare sunsets. A man might have watched with delight, beyond all words, last night, the long, deep purple lines of cloud, edged with intolerable radiance, passing into orange, yellow, pale green, and leaden blue, and reflected below in warm, purple shadows, and cold, green lights, upon the sea—and then, the dying of it all away. And then he might have remembered those lines of Shakspeare; and, often quoted as they are, the poet would have interpreted the sunset, and the sunset what the poet meant by the exclamation which follows the disappearance of a similar aerial vision—

We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of; and our narrow life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

No one has taught us this so earnestly as Wordsworth; for it was part of his great message to this century to remind us that the sphere of the poet is not only in the extraordinary, but in the ordinary and common.

The common things of sky and earth,  
And hill and valley, he has viewed:  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

From common things, that round us lie,  
Some random truths he can impart:  
The harvest of a quiet eye,  
That sleeps and broods on its own heart.

But, of course, if you lead a sensual life, or a mercenary or artificial life,

you will not read these truths in nature. The faculty of discerning them is not learnt either in the gin-palace or the ball-room. A pure heart, and a simple, manly life, alone can reveal to you all that which seer and poet saw.

This Lecture will be appropriately closed by a brief notice of the last work of our chief living poet, Alfred Tennyson. And I shall also endeavor to confute certain cavils raised against it; for after laying down what appear to be true canons of criticism, they may be further substantiated by the exposure of criticism which is false.

The poem entitled "In Memoriam" is a monument erected by friendship to the memory of a gifted son of the historian Hallam. It is divided into a number of cabinet-like compartments, which, with fine and delicate shades of difference, exhibit the various phases through which the bereaved spirit passes from the first shock of despair, dull, hopeless misery and rebellion, up to the dawn of hope, acquiescent trust, and even calm happiness again. In the mean while many a question has been solved, which can only suggest itself when suffering forces the soul to front the realities of our mysterious existence; such as: Is there indeed a life to come? And if there is, will it be a conscious life? Shall I know that myself? Will there be mutual recognition? continuance of attachments? Shall friend meet friend, and brother brother, as friends and brothers? Or, again: How comes it that one so gifted was taken away so early, in the maturity of his powers, just at the moment when they seemed about to become available to mankind? What means all this, and is there not something wrong? Is the law of Creation Love indeed?

By slow degrees, all these doubts, and worse, are answered; not as a philosopher would answer them, nor as a theologian, or a metaphysician, but as it is the duty of a poet to reply, by intuitive faculty, in strains in which Imagination predominates over Thought and Memory. And one of the manifold beauties of this exquisite poem, and which is another characteristic of true poetry, is that, piercing through all the sophistries and over-refinements of speculation, and the lifeless skepticism of science, it falls back upon the grand, primary, simple truths of our humanity; those first principles which underlie all creeds, which belong to our earliest childhood, and on which the wisest and best have rested through all ages; that all is right; that darkness shall be clear; that God and Time are the only interpreters: that Love is king: that the Immortal is in us: that—which is the key-note of the whole—

All is well, though Faith and Form  
Be sundered in the night of fear.

This is an essential quality of the highest poetry, whose characteristic is simplicity; not in the sense of being intelligible, like a novel, to every careless reader, without pain or effort; for the best poetry demands study as severe as mathematics require; and to any one who thinks that it can be treated as a mere relaxation and amusement for an idle hour, this Lecture does not address itself; but simplicity, in the sense of dealing with truths which do not belong to a few fastidious and refined intellects, but are the heritage of the many. The deepest truths are the simplest and the most common.

It is sometimes how generally the formalists have missed their way to the interpretation of this poem. It is sometimes declared with oracular decisiveness, that, if this be poetry, all they have been accustomed to call poetry must change its name. As if it were not a law that every original poet must be in a sense new; as if Æschylus were not a poet because he did not write an epic like Homer; or as if the Romantic poets were not poets because they departed from every rule of classical poetry. And as if, indeed, this very objection had not been brought against the Romantic school, and Shakspeare himself pronounced by French critics a "buffoon:" till Schlegel showed that

all life makes to itself its own form, and that Shakspeare's form had its living laws. So spoke the "Edinburgh Review" of Byron; but it could not arrest his career. So spoke Byron himself of Wordsworth; but he would be a bold man, or a very flippant one, who would dare to say now that Wordsworth is not a great poet. And the day will come when the slow, sure judgment of Time shall give to Tennyson his undisputed place among the English poets as a true one, of rare merit and originality.

To a coarser class of minds "In Memoriam" appears too melancholy; one long monotone of grief. It is simply one of the most victorious songs that ever poet chanted; with the mysterious undertone, no doubt, of sadness which belongs to all human joy, in front of the mysteries of death and sorrow; but that belongs to "Paradise Regained" as well as to "Paradise Lost;" to every true note, indeed, of human triumph except a Bacchanalian drinking-song. And that it should predominate in a monumental record is not particularly unnatural. But readers who never dream of mastering the plan of a work before they pretend to criticise details, can scarcely be expected to perceive that the wail passes into a hymn of solemn and peaceful beauty before it closes.

Another objection, proceeding from the religious periodicals, is, that the subject, being a religious one, is not treated religiously; by which they mean theologically. It certainly is neither saturated with Evangelicalism nor Tractarianism; nor does it abound in the routine phrases which, when missed, raise a suspicion of heterodoxy; nor does it seize the happy opportunity afforded for a pious denunciation of the errors of Purgatory and Mariolatry. But the objection to its want of definite theology—an objection, by-the-way, brought frequently against Wordsworth by writers of the same school—is, in fact, in favor of the presumption of its poetic merit; for it may be the office of the priest to teach upon authority—of the philosopher according to induction—but the province of the poet is neither to teach by induction nor by authority, but to appeal to those primal intuitions of our being which are eternally and necessarily true.

With one of those criticisms I mean to occupy your time at somewhat further length. Some months ago a leading journal devoted three or four columns to the work of depreciating Tennyson. I will answer that critique now as concisely as I can; not because it can do any permanent harm to Tennyson's reputation, but because it may do a great deal of harm to the taste of the readers.

Now, in any pretension to criticise a poetic work of internal unity, the first duty, plainly, is to comprehend the structure of it as a whole, and master the leading idea. It is to be regretted that this is precisely what English critics generally do not. Even with our own Shakspeare, admiration or blame is usually confined to the beauties and blemishes of detached passages. For the significance of each play, as a whole, we had to look, in the first instance, to such foreigners as Augustus Schlegel to teach us.

Let us inquire what conception the critic in question has formed of this beautiful poem.

"Let the acknowledgment be made at once that the writer dedicated his thoughts to a most difficult task. He has written two hundred pages upon one person—in other words, he has painted one hundred and twenty miniatures of the same individual."

Mr. Tennyson has not painted one hundred and twenty portraits of the same individual. He has written a poem in one hundred and twenty divisions, illustrative of the manifold phases through which the soul passes from doubt through grief to faith. With so entire and radical a misconception of the scope of the poem, it is not wonderful if the whole examination of the details should be a failure.

The first general charge is one of irreverence. The special case selected is these verses, which are called blasphemous—

But brooding on the dear one dead,  
And all he said of things divine,  
(And dear as sacramental wine  
To dying lips is all he said.)

One would have thought that the holy tenderness of this passage would have made this charge impossible. However, as notions of reverence and irreverence in some minds are singularly vague, we will give the flippant objection rather more attention than it merits.

By a sacrament we understand a means of grace; an outward something through which pure and holy feelings are communicated to the soul. In the Church of Christ there are two sacraments—the material of one is the commonest of all elements, water; the form of the other the commonest of all acts, a meal. Now there are two ways in which reverence may be manifested towards any thing or person; one, by exalting that thing or person by means of the depreciation of all others; another, by exalting all others through it. To some minds it appears an honoring of the sacraments to represent them as solitary things in their own kind, like nothing else, and all other things and acts profane in comparison of them. It is my own deep conviction that no greater dishonor can be done to them than by this conception, which degrades them to the rank of charms. The sacraments are honored when they consecrate all the things and acts of life. The commonest of all materials was sanctified to us in order to vindicate the sacredness of all materialism, in protest against the false spiritualism which affects to despise the body, and the world whose impressions are made upon the senses; and in order to declare that visible world God's, and the organ of his manifestation. The simplest of all acts is sacramental, in order to vindicate God's claim to all acts, and to proclaim our common life sacred, in protest against the conception which cleaves so obstinately to the mind that religion is the performance of certain stated acts, not necessarily of moral import, on certain days and in certain places. If there be any thing in this life sacred, any remembrance filled with sanctifying power, any voice which symbolizes to us the voice of God, it is the recollection of the pure and holy ones that have been taken from us, and of their examples and sacred words—

Dear as sacramental wine  
To dying lips.

In those lines Tennyson has deeply, no doubt unconsciously, that is, without dogmatic intention, entered into the power of the sacraments to diffuse their meaning beyond themselves. There is no irreverence in them; no blasphemy; nothing but delicate Christian truth.

The next definite charge is more difficult to deal with before a mixed society, because the shades of the feeling in question blend into each other with exceeding fine graduation. The language of the friend towards the departed friend is represented as unfitted for any but amatory tenderness. In this blame the critic is compelled to include Shakspeare; for we all know that his sonnets, dedicated either to the Earl of Southampton or the Earl of Pembroke, contained expressions which have left it a point of controversy whether they were addressed to a lady or a friend. Now in a matter which concerns the truthfulness of a human feeling, when an anonymous critic is on one side and Shakspeare on the other, there are some who might be presumptuous enough to suppose *à priori* that the modest critic is possibly not the one in the right. However, let us examine the matter. There are two kinds of friendship: one is the affection of the greater for the less, the other that of the less for

the greater. The greater and the less may be differences of rank, or intellect, or character, or power. These are the two opposites of feeling which respectively characterize the masculine and the feminine natures, the familiar symbols of which relationship are the oak and the ivy with its clinging tendrils. But though they are the masculine and feminine types, they are not confined to male and female. Most of us have gone through both these phases of friendship. Whoever remembers an attachment at school to a boy feebler than himself, will recollect the exulting pride of guardianship with which he shielded his friend from the oppression of some young tyrant of the play-ground. And whoever, at least in boyhood or youth, loved a man, to whose mental or moral qualities he looked up with young reverence, will recollect the devotion and the jealousies, and the almost passionate tenderness, and the costly gifts, and the desire of personal sacrifices, which characterize boyish friendship, and which certainly belong to the feminine, and not the masculine type of affection. Doubtless the language of "In Memoriam" is tender in the extreme, such as a sister might use to a brother deeply loved. But it is to be remembered that it expresses the affection of the spirit which rejoices to confess itself the feebler; and besides, that the man has passed into a spirit, and that time and distance have thrown a hallowing haze of tenderness over the lineaments of the friend of the past. It may be well also to recollect that there is a precedent for this woman-like tenderness, against whose authority one who condemns so severely the most distant approach to irreverence will scarcely venture to appeal. "I am distressed for thee, my brother, Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been to me. Thy love to me was wonderful, *passing the love of women.*"

Again, the praise and the grief of the poem are enormously "exaggerated;" and as an instance of the manner in which the "*poet* may underline the moralist," and delicately omit the defects without hyperbolic praise, Dr. Johnson's lines on Levett are cited with much fervor of admiration. Good, excellent Dr. Johnson! sincerely pious; very bigoted and very superstitious; yet one, withal, who fought the battle of life bravely out, in the teeth of disease and poverty; a great lexicographer; of massive learning; the author of innumerable prudential aphorisms, much quoted by persons who season their conversation with proverbs and old saws; the inditer of several thousand ponderous verses; a man worthy of all respect. But it is indeed a surprising apparition when the shade of Dr. Johnson descends upon the nineteenth century as the spirit of a poet, and we are asked to identify the rugged portrait which Boswell painted with a model of delicate forbearance.

After these general observations, the writer proceeds to criticise in detail; he awards some praise, and much blame. You shall have a specimen of each. Let us test the value of his praise. He selects for approbation, among others, these lines:

Or is it that the Past will win  
A glory from its being far;  
An orb into the perfect star  
We saw not when we moved therein!

The question has suggested itself as a misgiving to the poet's mind, whether his past affection was really as full of blessedness as memory painted it, or whether it be not the perspective of distance which conceals its imperfections, and throws purer hues upon it than it possessed while actual. In the rapid reading of the last two lines I may not have at once conveyed to you the meaning. So long as we remain upon any planet—this earth, for instance—it would wear a commonplace, earthly look; but if we could ascend from it into space, in proportion to the distance, it would assume a heavenly aspect, and orb or round itself into a star. This is a very simple and graceful illustration. Now hear the critic condescending to be an analyst of its beauties:

“There is indeed something striking and suggestive in comparing the gone-by time to some luminous body rising like a red harvest-moon behind us, lighting our path homeward.”

So that this beautiful simile of Tennyson's, of a distant star receding into pale and perfect loveliness, in the hands of the critic becomes a *great red harvest-moon!*

So much for the praise. Now for the blame. The following passage is selected :

Oh, if indeed that eye foresee,  
Or see (in Him is no before)  
In more of life true love no more,  
And love the indifference to be,

So might I find, ere yet the morn  
Breaks hither over Indian seas,  
That Shadow waiting with the keys,  
To cloak me from my proper scorn.

That is, as you will see at once, after the thought of the transitoriness of human affection has occurred to him, the possibility is also suggested with it, that he himself may change ; but he prays that before that day can come he may find the Shadow waiting with the keys to cloak him from his own scorn. Now I will read the commentary :

“Lately we have heard much of keys, both from the Flaminian Gate and Piccadilly, but we back this verse against Hobbs. We dare him to pick it. Mr. Moxon may hang it up in his window, with a two hundred-pound prize attached, more safely than a Brahmah. That a shadow should hold keys at all, is a noticeable circumstance ; but that it should wait with a cloak, ready to be thrown over a gentleman in difficulties, is absolutely amazing.”

The lock may be picked without any exertion of unfair force.

A few pages before he has spoken of the breaking up of a happy friendship—

There sat the Shadow, feared by man,  
Who broke our fair companionship.

Afterwards he calls it :

The Shadow, cloaked from head to foot,  
Who keeps the key of all the creeds.

Take, at a venture, any charity-school boy of ordinary intelligence, read to him these lines, and he will tell you that the Shadow feared by man is death ; that it is cloaked from head to foot because death is mysterious, and its form not distinguishable ; and that he keeps the keys of all the creeds, because he alone can unlock the secret of the grave, and show which of all conflicting human creeds is true.

“It is a noticeable thing,” we are told, “that a shadow should hold keys at all.” It is a very noticeable thing that a skeleton should hold a scythe and an hour-glass ; very noticeable that a young lady should hold scales when she is blindfold ; yet it is not a particularly uncommon rule of symbolism so to represent Time and Justice. Probably the writer in the criticism, if he should chance to read of “riding on the wings of the wind,” would consider it a very noticeable method of locomotion ; perhaps would inquire, with dull facetiousness, what was the precise length of the primary, secondary, and tertiary quills of the said wings ; and if told of a spirit clothing itself in light, he might triumphantly demand in what loom light could be woven into a great-coat.

Finally : the critique complains that a vast deal of poetic feeling has been wasted on a lawyer ; and much wit is spent upon the tenderness which is given to “Amaryllis of the Chancery bar.” A barrister, it seems, is beyond the

pale of excusable, because political sensibilities. So that, if my friend be a soldier, I may love him, and celebrate him in poetry, because the profession of arms is by all conventional associations heroic; or if he bears on his escutcheon the red hand of knighthood, or wears a ducal coronet, or even be a shepherd, still there are poetic precedents for romance; but if he be a member of the Chancery bar, or only a cotton lord, then, because these are not yet grades accredited as heroic in song, worth is not worth, and honor is not honor, and nobleness is not nobility. Oh, if we wanted poets for nothing else, it would be for this, that they are the grand levellers, vindicating the sacredness of our common humanity, and in protest against such downright vulgarity of heart as this, reminding us that—

For a' that, and a' that,  
A man's a man for a' that.

So much, then, for this critic; wrong when he praises and wrong when he blames; who finds Shakspeare false to the facts of human nature, and quotes Dr. Johnson as a model poet; who can not believe in the poetry of any expression unless it bear the mint-stamp of a precedent, and can not understand either the exaggerations or the infinitude of genuine grief.

Let it serve to the members of this institution as a comment on the opinion quoted at the outset, that it is sufficient education for working-men to read the newspapers. If they form no more living conception of what poetry is than such as they get from the flippant criticism of a slashing article, they may learn satire, but not enthusiasm. If they limit their politics to the knowledge they may pick up from daily newspapers (which, with a few honorable exceptions, seem bound to pander to all the passions and prejudices of their respective factions) they will settle down into miserable partisans. And if working-men are to gain their notions of Christianity from the sneering, snarling gossip of the religious newspapers, I, for one, do not marvel that indignant infidelity is so common among them.

And let it be to us all a warning against that detracting, depreciating spirit which is the curse and bane both of the religion and the literature of our day—that spirit which has no sympathy with aught that is great beyond the pale of customary formalities, and sheds its blighting influence over all that is enthusiastic, and generous, and high-minded. It is possible for a sneer or a cavil to strike sometimes a superficial fact; I never knew the one or the other reach the deep heart and blessedness of truth.

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## LECTURE II.

*Delivered before the Members of the Mechanics' Institution, February, 1852.*

In the former lecture I endeavored to answer the question, What is poetry? Two replies were given: It is the natural language of excited feeling; and, A work of imagination wrought into form by art. We said that it arises out of the necessity of expression, and the impossibility of adequate expression of any of the deeper feelings in direct terms. Hence the soul clothes those feelings in symbolic and sensuous imagery, in order to *suggest* them.

And thus our definitions agree with two of Milton's requirements for poetry—that it be "simple, sensuous, passionate." Sensuous—that is, suggestive to the imagination of truth through images which make their impres-



sion on the senses. Passionate—that is, as opposed to scientific; for the province of poetry is not the intellect, but the feelings.

And thus, too, they coincide with the character given to poetry by the great critic of antiquity, as an imitative art; for it is the art of suggesting and thus imitating through form, the feelings that have been suggested by another form, or perhaps have arisen without form at all. So it takes its place with all art, whose office is not to copy form by form, but to express and hint spiritual truths.

It is plain, from what has been said, that poetry may be spoken of in two senses. In the specific or technical sense, by poetry we mean the expression in words—most appropriately metrical words—of the truths of imagination and feeling. But in the generic and larger sense, poetry is the expression of imaginative truth in any form, provided only that it be symbolic, suggestive, and indirect. Hence we said that there is a poetry of sculpture, architecture, painting; and hence all nature is poetical, because it is the form in which the eternal feeling has clothed itself with infinite suggestiveness: and hence Lord Byron calls the stars “the poetry of heaven;” and tells us that to him “high mountains were a feeling;” and that mountain and wood and sky spake

A mutual language, clearer than the tome  
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake  
For Nature's pages, glassed by sunbeams on the lake.

And hence Wordsworth tells us that Liberty has two voices :

One is of the sea,  
And one is of the mountains.

And hence a greater than either has said that the Heavens speak, and that “There is neither speech nor language where their voices are not heard.” And hence, too, woman has been called the poetry of life, because her presence in this lower world expresses for us, as well as calls out, those infinite feelings of purity, tenderness, and devotion, whose real existence is in our own bosoms. And hence, again, there is a poetry in music; not in that in which sound imitates sound, as when the roaring of the sea, or the pattering of the rain, or church bells, or bugles, or the groans of the dying are produced, for in such cases there is only a mimicry, more or less ingenious; but that in which we can almost fancy that there is something analogous to the inner history of the human heart—an expression of resolve, or moral victory, or aspiration, or other feelings far more shadowy, infinite, and intangible; or that in which the feelings of a nation have found for themselves an indirect and almost unconscious utterance, as it is said of the Irish melody, that through its long centuries of depression have breathed themselves out in cadences of a wild, low wail.

We divided poets into two orders: those in whom the vision and the faculty divine of imagination exists; and those in whom the plastic power of shaping predominates—the men of poetic inspiration and the men of poetic taste. In the first order I placed Tennyson; in the second, Pope.

Considerable discussion, I am told, has been excited among the men of this institution by both these positions—some warmly defending them, and others as warmly impugning. For myself, it is an abundant reward to find that working-men can be interested in such questions—that they can debate the question whether Pope was a poet, and be induced to read Tennyson. For the true aim of every one who aspires to be a teacher is, or ought to be, not to impart his own opinions, but to kindle other minds. I care very little, comparatively, whether you adopt my views or not; but I do care much to know that I can be the humble instrument, in this or higher matters,

of leading any man to stir up the power within him, and to form a creed and faith which are in a living way, and not on mere authority, his own.

However, I will explain to you on what grounds I made these two assertions. And, first, as respects Pope—if any one approved of what I said, under the impression that I denied to Pope the name of poet, I must disclaim his approbation; I did not say so. Pope is a true poet; in his own order he stands among the foremost; only, that order is the second, not the first. In the mastery of his materials, which are words, in the plastic power of expression, he is scarcely surpassed. His melody—I do not say his harmony, which is a much higher thing—is unquestionable. There is no writer from whom so many of those sparkling epigrammatic sentences, which are the staple commodities of quotation, are introduced into conversation; none who can be read with more pleasure, and even profit. He has always a masculine fancy; more rarely, imagination. But you look in vain for the truths which come from a large heart and a seeing eye; in vain for the “thoughts that breathe and the words that burn;” in vain for those flashes of truth which, like the lightning in a dark night, make all luminous, open out unsuspected glories of tree and sky and building, interpret us to ourselves, and “body forth the shapes of things unknown;” truths which are almost prophetic. Who has not read his “Essay on Man,” again and again? And yet it is but the philosophy of Bolingbroke melodiously expressed in rhyme; whereas the office of poetry is not to make us think accurately, but feel truly. And his “Rape of the Lock,” which seems to me the one of all his works that most deserves the name of poetry, the nearest approach to a creation of the fancy, describes aristocratic society, which is uniform, polished, artificial, and out of which a mightier master of the art than Pope could scarcely have struck the notes of true passion. Moreover, its machinery, the Rosicrucian fancies of sylphs and gnomes, is but machinery, lifeless. If you compare Shakspeare’s Ariel or Puck, things alive, preternatural, and yet how natural! with these automatons, you will feel the difference between a living creation and cleverly moved puppet-work. Throughout you have thought, not imagination; intellect, not intuition.

I read you last time Pope’s estimate of his own art; now, contrast it with the conceptions formed of poetry by men whom I would place in the first order.

First, let Burns speak. The spirit of Scottish poesy has appeared to him, and given him his commission. She says:

I saw thee seek the sounding shore,  
Delighted with the dashing roar;  
Or when the North his fleecy store  
Drove through the sky—  
I saw grim Nature’s visage hoar,  
Struck thy young eye.

Or when the deep, green-mantled earth,  
Warm-cherished ev’ry flow’ret’s birth,  
And joy and music pouring forth  
In every grove—  
I saw thee eye the gen’ral mirth,  
With boundless love.

Observe that exquisite account of the true poetic or creative power which comes from love, the power of sympathy with the happiness of all kinds of being—“I saw thee eye the gen’ral mirth *with boundless love!*”

Wordsworth shall speak next. I select his “Sonnet to Haydon.” You remember poor Haydon’s tragic end. He died by his own hand, disappointed because the world had not appreciated nor understood his paintings. It had been well for Haydon had he taken to heart the lesson of these lines, preg-

nant with manly strength for every one, poet or teacher, who is striving to express deep truths for which the men of his generation are not prepared.

And remark, merely by-the-way, in this sonnet, Wordsworth's corroboration of the view I have placed before you, that poetry is a something to which words are the accidental, not by any means the essential form.

High is our calling, friend! Creative Art,  
(Whether the instrument of words she use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to desert.  
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,  
Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness—  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!

We will next listen to the account given us by Milton of the conditions under which poetry is possible—lofty and majestic, as we should expect from him: "This is not to be obtained but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly and generous acts and affairs."

Tennyson shall close this brief list with what he thinks the poet's calling:

The poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love.

That is, the Prophet of Truth receives for his dower the scorn of men in whose breasts scorn dwells; hatred from men who hate; while his reward is in the gratitude and affection of men who seek the truth which they love, more eagerly than the faults which their acuteness can blame.

He saw through life and death, through good and ill,  
He saw through his own soul,  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,  
Before him lay.

And again:

Thus truth was multiplied on truth: the world  
Like one great garden show'd,  
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurled  
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise,  
Her beautiful, bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burning eyes  
Melted like snow.

Rare gifts of nature: power to read the "open secret of the universe;" the apostleship of light, truth, liberty; the faculty of discerning the life and meaning which underlie all forms: this is Tennyson's notion of a poet. You have heard the master-spirits discoursing of their art. Now if, after these, you turn to Pope's conception again, you will feel there is a descent as into another region. A mighty gulf lies between. It is impossible to place these men in the same order. No man is higher than his own ideal of excellence; it is well if he attains that. Pope reached all he aimed at; he reached no more.

I placed Tennyson in the first order. And this not from any bigoted blindness to his deficiencies and faults, which are many; nor from any Quixotic desire to compare him with the very highest; but because, if the division be a true one which separates poets into the men of genuine passion and men of skill, it is impossible to hesitate in which Tennyson is to be placed. I ranked him with the first order, because with great mastery over his material—words, great plastic power of versification and a rare gift of harmony, he has also vision or insight; and because, feeling intensely the great questions of his day, not as a mere man of letters, but as a man, he is to some extent the interpreter of his age, not only in its mysticism, which I tried to show you is the necessary reaction from the rigid formulas of science and the earthliness of an age of work, into the vagueness which belongs to infinitude, but also in his poetic and almost prophetic solution of some of its great questions.

Thus in his "Princess," which he calls a "medley," the former half of which is sportive, and the plot almost too fantastic and impossible for criticism, while the latter portion seems too serious for a story so slight and flimsy, he has with exquisite taste disposed of the question which has its burlesque and comic as well as its tragic side, of woman's present place and future destinies. And if any one wishes to see this subject treated with a masterly and delicate hand, in protest alike against the theories which would make her as the man, which she could only be by becoming masculine, not manly, and those which would have her to remain the toy, or the slave, or the slight thing of sentimental and frivolous accomplishment which education has hitherto aimed at making her, I would recommend him to study the few last pages of the "Princess," where the poet brings the question back, as a poet should, to nature; develops the ideal out of the actual woman, and reads out of what she is, on the one hand, what her Creator intended her to be, and, on the other, what she never can nor ought to be.

And again, in his "In Memoriam," he has grappled with the skepticism of his age; not like the school-divine, but like a poet; not as a priest, with the thunder of the pulpit or the ban of the conventicle, but as a man; a man of large, human heart, who feels that not doubt, but faith, is greatness and blessedness, yet that doubt must not be put down by force or terror, nor silenced by logic, but pass into belief through sorrow, and by appeal to the intuitions of the soul.

The severity with which an article written against this poem was criticised in the previous lecture may have seemed to you more than adequate. Let me explain. Three things only in this world should receive no quarter: Hypocrisy, Pharisaism, and Tyranny. Hypocrisy, of course, is out of the question here. But by Pharisaism in religion we mean, not attachment to forms, but an incapacity of seeing or believing in goodness separate from some particular form, either of words or ritual. The incipient stage of Pharisaism is that in which men are blind to excellence which does not belong to their own faction; the final and completed stage is that in which goodness seems actually evil. Plainly, there can be no remedy for that; when good is taken for evil, and evil for good, the heart has reached its last rottenness. By Pharisaism in art we mean, not an attachment to particular schools, but an inability of recognizing beauty, except in accordance with conventional rules and established maxims; its incipient stage is when beauty in aberrant types is not felt; its final and hopeless stage is reached when such beauty appears deformity.

Now it was the Pharisaism of that article which appeared to me to deserve no common severity.

Tyranny merits the same treatment. Had it been from a feeble antagonist that this criticism proceeded, it might have been left unnoticed. Who "breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?" Or had it been vulgar, personal slander, it had

been met, as all such things are best met, in silence. But the journal in which this critique appeared is no vulgar slanderer; scarcely ever is an article in its columns deficient in talent, at least; few would like to writhe beneath its lash. It wields a gigantic power. Well, it is excellent

To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant.

And because that article was written with merciless severity, weighted with all the authority of a powerful journal, and hidden behind the shelter of an anonymous incognito, therefore it seemed to me a bounden duty to show to working-men that a giant can be crushed, and that they are not to be led blindfold by the press; inasmuch as even an article in the "leading journal of Europe" may be flippant, clever, arrogant, and shallow.

We proceed to the more direct business of this evening: the *influence* of Poetry on the working-classes. But first, I disclaim the notion of treating this subject as if poetry had a different sort of influence on them from that which it has on other classes. Very false is that mode of thought which recognizes the souls of the classes who are not compelled to work as composed of porcelain, and of those who are doomed to work as made of clay. They feel, weep, laugh alike; alike have their aspiring and their degraded moods; that which tells on one human spirit tells also upon another. Much, therefore, of what is to be said will belong to men of work; not specially, but only as human beings. If poetry influences men, it must influence working-men.

The influence of poetry depends partly on the form, and partly on the spirit which animates the form. I will consider the influence of form first.

We have defined poetry to be a work of imagination wrought into form by art. Poetry is not imagination, but imagination shaped. Not feeling, but feeling expressed symbolically; the formless suggested indirectly through form. Hence the form is an essential element of poetry; and it becomes necessary to trace its influence.

The form in which poetical feeling expresses itself is infinitely varied. There may be a poetical act, or a poetical picture, or a poetical aspect of scenery, or poetical words; to which last form we technically give the name of poetry.

Take an example from an expression of countenance, which may be poetical. There are feelings which can not be spoken out in words; therefore the Creator has so constituted the human countenance that it is expressive, and you only catch the meaning sympathetically by the symbolism of the features. We have all seen such poetry. We have seen looks inspired. We have seen whole worlds of feeling in a glance; scorn, hatred, devotion, infinite tenderness. This is what, in portraits, we call expression, as distinguished from similarity of feature. Innumerable touches perfect the one; sometimes one masterly stroke will suggest the other, so that nothing can add to it. This is poetry. To such a look the addition of a word would have spoilt all—

For words are weak, and most to seek,  
When wanted fifty-fold:  
And then, if silence will not speak,  
And trembling lip, and changing cheek,  
There's nothing *told*.

The form of poetry, again, may be that of a symbolical action. The Eastern nations express themselves abundantly in this way; and if the subject were not too sacred, I might adduce many examples from the significant actions of the Hebrew prophets. But I will, instead, instance a case of modern history. Perhaps you have read the anecdote (I do not know on what historical authority it rests) of the Earl of Warwick, in one of his last

battles, probably that of Barnet, when he found the day going against him, dismounting from his favorite charger, and before all his army plunging his sword into his heart, thereby cutting off the possibility of escape, and expressing his resolve there to win or fall. Conceive Warwick putting that into direct words. Conceive his attempting to express all that was implied in that act; the energy of despair, the resolve, the infinite defiance, the untold worlds of *force* that must be in a man who could do an act the whole terrible-ness of which none but a soldier could appreciate, slaying with his own hand the horse and friend that had borne him through death and perils. And conceive the influence upon the troops—how it must have said to any recreant waverer in the ranks, “Stand like a man, and dare to die!”

The next instance is a less dignified one; but I select it that we may discern the manifold shapes and degrees of poetic form. History tells us of a prince of France who asked permission to offer a present to one much loved. The permission was given; the gift chosen, a portrait; but with a stipulation annexed, in order to prevent extravagance, that it should not be larger than could be worn as a ring upon the finger, and that it should not be set in jewels. The portrait was completed as agreed on; but, instead of a glass, it was covered with a single plate, cut out of the centre of an enormous diamond, which, of course, was sacrificed in the cutting. When the ingenious treachery was discovered, the picture was returned: whereupon the royal lover ground the diamond to powder, and dusted with it, instead of sand, his letter of reply. The use of this? It was useless. Had it been a matter of utility, it had not been one of poetry. It was modified by French feeling, doubtless. Yet beneath it you will discern something that was not merely French, but human, and which constitutes the poetry of the whole system of present-giving. That which in the polite Frenchman was something more than gallantry, would have been in another, and in him, too, under more earnest or less successful circumstances, the chivalrous feeling which desires to express itself in its true essence, as devotion to the weaker, through a sacrifice which shall be costly (the costlier the more grateful, as the relief of feeling to the giver), and which shall be quite immeasurable by, and independent of, the question of utility. The love of the base and plebeian spirit is the desire to *take* all it can. The love of the nobler spirit is the desire to *give* all it can. Sacrifice is its only true expression; and every form of sacrifice in which the soul tries to express and relieve itself, whether it be in the lavish magnificence in which self and life can be freely spent, or the vulgar magnificence called princely, with which gold and jewels can be squandered, is a form of poetry, more or less dignified.

It will now be clear that, in the large sense of the word poetry, its proper form is always symbolism. The poet derives his power from the ardor of mankind to adopt symbols, and catch enthusiasm from them. Poetry is the language of symbolism.

Therefore we all are susceptible of its influences. Many a man who thinks he has no taste for poetry, because he does not chance to feel it in one of its forms, rhythmic words, is yet no stranger to its power. What is religious formalism but an exaggeration or petrification of a true conviction—that outward forms and material symbols have a language of their own, fraught with a deeper, because infinite, religious significance to the heart than ever came from the poor rhetoric of the pulpit? Why is it that on the battle-field there is ever one spot where the sabres glitter faster, and the pistol's flash is more frequent, and men and officers crowd together in denser masses? They are struggling for a flag, or an eagle, or a standard. Strip it of its symbolism, take from it the meaning with which the imagination has invested it, and it is nothing but a bit of silk rag, torn with shot and blackened with powder. Now go with your common sense and tell the soldier he is madly striving

about a bit of rag. See if your common sense is as true to him as his poetry, or able to quench it for a moment.

Take a case. Among the exploits of marvellous and almost legendary valor performed by that great chieftain to whom not many years ago, when disaster after disaster left it uncertain whether the next mail would bring us news that we possessed any Indian Empire at all, the voice of England, with one unanimous impulse, cried, "There is one man in Britain who has the right of wisdom as well as courage to command in chief"—that daring warrior who, when the hour of danger was past, and the hour of safety had come, was forgotten by his country; to whom in the hour of fresh danger the people of England will look again, and his generous spirit will forget neglect; who has been laid aside uncoroneted and almost unhonored, because he *would* promote and distinguish the men of work in preference to the men of rank, and wealth, and titled idleness—among his achievements not the least wondrous was his subjugation of the robber tribes of the Cutchee hills, in the north of Scinde. Those warriors had been unslain for six hundred years. They dwelt in a crater-like valley, surrounded by mountains, through which there were but two or three narrow entrances, and up which there was no access but by goat-paths, so precipitous that brave men grew dizzy and could not proceed. So rude and wild was the fastness of Trukkee, that the entrances themselves could scarcely be discovered amidst the labyrinth-like confusion of rocks and mountains. It was part of the masterly plan by which Sir Charles Napier had resolved to storm the stronghold of the robbers, to cause a detachment of his army to scale the mountain-side. A service so perilous could scarcely be commanded. Volunteers were called for. There was a regiment, the 64th Bengal Infantry, which had been recently disgraced, in consequence of mutiny at Shikarpoor, their colonel cashiered, and their colors taken from them—a hundred of these men volunteered. "Soldiers of the 64th," said the commander, who knew the way to the soldier's heart, "your colors are on the top of yonder hill!" I should like to have seen the precipice that would have deterred the 64th regiment, after words like those from the lips of the conqueror of Scinde!

And now, suppose that you had gone with common sense and economic science, and proved to them that the colors they were risking their lives to win back were worth but so many shillings sterling value—tell me, which would the stern workers of the 64th regiment have found it easiest to understand, common sense or poetry? Which would they have believed, Science, which said, "It is manufactured silk;" or Imagination, whose kingly voice had made it "colors?"

It is in this sense that the poet has been called, as the name imports, creator, namer, maker. He stamps his own feeling on a form or symbol; names it, and makes it what it was not before; giving to feeling a local habitation and a name, by associating it with form. Before it was silk—so many square feet; now it is a thing for which men will die.

And here we get at two distinctions:

First, between the poet and the rhymester. A poet is one who creates or names; who interprets old or new thoughts by fresh symbolism. The rhymester repeats the accredited forms and phrases; and because he has got the knack of using metaphors and diction, which have been the living language of the makers of them, he is mistaken for a poet. Smooth writing, and facility of versification, and expertness in piecing together poetical words and images, do not constitute poetry.

Next, a distinction between the poet and the mystic. The poet uses symbols, knowing that they are symbols. The mystic mistakes them for realities. Thus to Swedenborg a cloud, or a vine, or a cedar, correspond throughout Scripture with one mystic spiritual truth; mean one thing, and but one.

And thus to the mystical formalist, a sign or symbol is confused with the truth which it symbolizes; that symbol is *the* symbol of that truth; and to treat the symbol as Hezekiah treated the brazen serpent is sacrilege. Now the poet remains sane upon this point; his "fine frenzy" never reaches the insanity which mistakes its own creations for fixed realities. To him a cloud or flower may express at different times a thousand truths; material things are types to him, in a certain mood, of this truth or that; but he knows that to another person, or to himself in another mood, they are types of something else.

Tennyson has said this well:

But any man who walks the mead,  
 In bud, or blade, or bloom may find,  
 According as his humors lead,  
 A meaning suited to his mind.  
 For liberal applications lie  
 In Art as Nature, dearest friends:  
 So 'twere to cramp its use, if I  
 Should hook it to some useful end.

And this will help us to discern how far there is truth in the opinion that poetry belongs to the earlier ages, and declines with the advance of civilization. Symbols perish—poetry never dies. There was a time when the Trojan war, before Homer sang it, was what Milton says of the unsung wars of the Saxon heptarchy—a conflict of kites and crows; the martyr's stake, a gibbet; Olympus and Parnassus, and a hill more holy still, common hills. The time may come when, as they were once without poetical associations, most of them shall be unpoetical again. And because of such a dying of the glory from the past, people begin to fancy that poetry has perished. But is human courage lost, fidelity, imagination, honorable aims? Is the necessity of utterance gone, or the sufficiency of finite words for illimitable feeling greater? When the old colors of a regiment are worn out, it is sometimes the custom to burn them, and drink the ashes in wine, with solemn silence, before the consecration of new colors. Well, that is all we want. Let old forms and time-honored words perish with due honor, and give us fresh symbols and new forms of speech to express, not what our fathers felt, but what we feel. Goëthe says, "The spirit-world is not foreclosed. *Thy* senses are dulled; *thy* heart is dead. Arise, become a learner; and bathe that earthly breast of thine, unwearied, in the dew of a fresh morning."

And this alone would be enough to show that the poetry of the coming age must come from the working-classes. In the upper ranks, poetry, so far at least as it represents their life, has long been worn out, sickly and sentimental. Its manhood is effete. Feudal aristocracy with its associations, the castle and the tournament, has passed away. Its last healthy tones came from the harp of Scott. Byron sang its funeral dirge. But tenderness, and heroism, and endurance still want their voice, and it must come from the classes whose observation is at first hand, and who speak fresh from Nature's heart. What has poetry to do with the working-classes? Men of work! we want our poetry from you—from men who will dare to live a brave and true life; not like poor Burns, who was fevered with flattery, manful as he was, and dazzled by the vulgar splendors of the life of the great, which he despised and still longed for; but rather like Ebenezer Elliot, author of the "Corn-Law Rhymes." Our soldier-ancestors told you the significance of high devotion and loyalty which lay beneath the smoke of battlefields. Now rise and tell us the living meaning there may be in the smoke of manufactories, and the heroism of perseverance, and the poetry of invention, and the patience of uncomplaining resignation. Remember the stirring words of one of your own poets:



There's a light about to break,  
 There's a day about to dawn:  
 Men of thought, and men of action!  
 Clear the way!

Consider, next, the influence of the spirit of poetry as distinguished from the particular form in which it may be manifested.

The poets of the higher order are susceptible of a still further subdivision. There are those who project themselves out of their own particular being, and become by imagination one with that on which they meditate; and those who inform all they gaze on with their own individuality—those, that is, who sympathize with all that is created; and those whose imagination makes all to sympathize with them. I need not say which of these two classes is the domain of the higher poetry. Wherever egoism enters, whether it be into life or into art, it degrades and narrows; he through whom the universe speaks what God intended it to speak, is, as a poet, greater than he who through all the universe still only speaks out himself.

Now remark the different influence of these classes.

First we have those whose imagination represents all nature as sympathizing with them; and just as through a colored glass a landscape looks red, blue, or yellow, as the glass may be tinted, so does one feeling modify all others, and color all things with its own hue. In some measure this is true of us all.

I may not hope from outward forms to win  
 The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.  
 O Lady! we receive but what we give,  
 And in our life alone does nature live:  
 Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!\*

We all possess this tendency when the imagination has been intensified by one single passion, or narrowed by one absorbing pursuit. Let me give you a very homely illustration. I was once passing through the finest street in England on the outside of a mail-coach. A young woman who sat near me, when we had reached the end of the street, suddenly exclaimed, "I never saw so many narrow doors in all my life!" When the first surprise produced by an exclamation so much in discord with my own thoughts had subsided, I began to make inquiries, and discovered that her father was a builder. The builder's daughter had cast the hue of her daily associations over every thing. To her the buildings gray with the hoar of ages were as if they were not; historical interest, architectural beauty, solemn associations did not exist. To her there was nothing there but stones graven by the stonemason's chisel, and doors, measurable by the rule of the carpenter. And in the same way do we all color nature with our own pursuits. To a sportsman, a rich field is covert for game; to a farmer, the result of guano; to a geologist, indication of a certain character of subjacent rock.

It is very instructive to observe how superstition can thus summon all nature to be the minister of our human history, especially when it is rendered more imperious in its demands by pride. There is scarcely an ancient family which has not the tradition of preternatural appearances preceding the death or connected with the destinies of the chief members of the race. Shakspeare, as usual, gives us this. Lear's anguish sheds the hue of ingratitude over the heavens. To Timon, sun, and moon, and stars are tinctured with his misanthropy. To Macbeth, meditating murder, all nature is preternatural, sounds of simple instinct ominous, and all things conscious of his secret.

Now o'er the one half-world  
 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse  
 The curtain'd sleep; now witchcraft celebrates

\* Coleridge, "Ode to Dejection."

Pale Hecate's offerings; and withered murder,  
 Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,  
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design  
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,  
 And take the present horror from the time,  
 Which now suits with it.

Come, sealing night,  
 Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
 And, with thy bloody and invisible hand,  
 Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond  
 Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow  
 Makes wing to the rooky wood;  
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;  
 While night's black agents to their prey do rouse!

Observe, again, how Casca's conscience, already half-burdened, distorts the simplest phenomena :

Against the capitol I met a lion,  
 Who glared upon me, and went surly by  
 Without annoying me; and there were drawn  
 Upon a heap a hundred ghastly women  
 Transformed with their fear; who swore they saw  
 Men all in fire walk up and down the streets.  
 And yesterday, the bird of night did sit,  
 Even at noonday, upon the market-place,  
 Hooting and shrieking.

Of all this apparent supernaturalism, Cicero gives the true account in reply :

Indeed, it is a strange disposed time;  
 But men may construe things after their fashion,  
 Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.

And Calphurnia, with a presentiment of her husband's doom :

There is one within,  
 Besides the things that we have heard and seen,  
 Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.  
 A lioness hath whelped in the streets:  
 And graves have yawned and yielded up their dead:  
 Fierce, fiery warriors fight upon the clouds  
 In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,  
 Which drizzled blood upon the capitol:  
 The noise of battle hurtled in the air,  
 Horses do neigh, and dying men did groan:  
 And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.

Mark, too, how, as I said, pride has its share in giving shape to this superstition. Cæsar replies, the valor of the conqueror defying omens, and the large heart of the man recognizing his subjection to the laws of a common humanity :

Yet Cæsar shall go forth: for these predictions  
 Are to the world in general, as to Cæsar.

But Calphurnia, with that worship of high birth which is peculiar to the feminine nature, answers :

When beggars die there are no comets seen:  
 The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

So wonderful is that egoism of man which can thus overspread the heavens with its woes, and read in the planets only prophecies of himself! Now that which belongs to us all in some moods is characteristic of some poets through

all their nature, and pervades their work. The influence, therefore, of this class of poetry depends upon the *man*. The self which is thrown upon nature may be the lower or the higher self, and the influence will be correspondingly of the lower or the higher kind.

Among the former divisions of the egoistic class of first-rate poets, severe justice compels me with pain to place Lord Byron. Brought up under the baleful influences of Calvinism, which makes sovereign will the measure of right, instead of right the cause and law of will, a system which he all his life hated and believed—fancying himself the mark of an inexorable decree, and bidding a terrible defiance to the unjust One who had fixed his doom—no wonder that, as in that strange phenomenon the spectre of the Brocken, the traveller sees a gigantic form cast upon the mists, which he discovers at last to be but his own shadow, so the noble poet went through life haunted, turn which way he would, with the gigantic shadow of himself, which obscured the heavens and turned the light into thick darkness.

Foremost among those in whom a higher self informs all objects, stands Milton. We are compelled to place him with those in whom egoism is not wholly absorbed in nature. Shakspeare is a "voice." Read Shakspeare through, and, except from some of his sonnets, you could not guess who or what manner of man he was. But you could not read Milton long without discovering the man through the poet. His domestic miseries are reflected in his "Samson Agonistes." In his "Comus," that majestic psalm to Chastity, are blended the antique heroism of his Pagan studies, and the Christian sanctities of his rare manhood. His very angels reason upon Puritan questions; and it was the taunt of Pope, that in the Eternal lips themselves redemption is a contrivance or scheme according to the systematic theology of a school divine. And yet the egoism with which all his poetry is impregnated is the egoism of a glorious nature. If we were asked who in the eighteen Christian centuries stands before us as the highest approximation to what we conceive as Christian manhood, in which are rarely blended the opposites of purity and passion, gracefulness and strength, sanctity and manifold fitness for all the worldly duties of the man and the citizen, we should scarcely hesitate to answer—John Milton. The poet is overshadowed by the individual man; but the influence of the man is all for good.

Now compare with these the poets who see in Nature not themselves, but Nature; who are her voice, not she theirs. Of this class, likewise, there are two divisions: the first represented by Shakspeare, the second by Wordsworth.

Shakspeare is an universal poet, because he utters all that is in men; Wordsworth, because he speaks that which is in all men. There is much difference between these two statements.

The perfection of Shakspeare, like all the highest perfection, consists, not in the predominance of a single quality or feeling, but in the just balance and perfect harmony of all. You can not say whether the tragic element of our nature, or the comic, predominates; whether he has more sympathy with its broad laugh or its secret sigh; with the contemplativeness of Hamlet, which lets the moment of action pass, or the promptitude of Hotspur; with the aristocratic pride of Coriolanus, which can not deign to canvas the mob for votes, or the coarse wit and human instincts of the serving-men.

Wordsworth, on the contrary, gives to us humanity stripped of its peculiarities; the feelings which do not belong to this man or that, this or that age, but are the heritage of our common nature. "That," says he in a private letter, "which will distinguish my poems hereafter from those of other poets, is this: that while other poets labored to exhibit that which distinguishes one man from another, especially the dramatic poets, I have made it my concern to exhibit that which is common to all men."

As a specimen of this, take that well-known poem :

She was a phantom of delight,  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;  
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time's brightest, loveliest dawn;  
A dancing shape, an image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A spirit, yet a woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a spirit still, and bright,  
With something of an angel light.

You will observe that it is not a portrait like one of Shakspeare's, in which, gradually, a particular female character unfolds a personality which belongs to *Miranda* or to *Juliet*, and could not belong to *Cleopatra* or to *Lady Macbeth*; nor a description like *Tennyson's*, which, if true of *Isabel* or *Lilian*, must be false of *Adeline* or *Eleanore*: nor, again, this or that woman, colored in the false hues which passion or fancy have thrown on her for a time: but womanhood in its essence, and divested of its peculiarities of nation or century; such as her Creator meant her to be; such as every woman is potentially if not actually; such as she appears successively to the lover, the husband, and the friend, separating from such lover, husband, and friend the accidents of an English, Spanish, or French temperament. And yet, remark that this womanhood, so painted, is not a mere thin, unsubstantial abstraction of the intellect; but a living, tangible image, appreciable by the senses, a single, total impression, "sensuous," as *Milton* says of poetry: else it would not be poetry, but a scientific definition. You have before you an ideal clothed in flesh and blood, without the limitations of any particular idiosyncrasy.

This is the sense in which poets like *Wordsworth* are universal poets and free from egoism; very different from the sense in which *Shakspeare* is universal.

Now to compare the various influences of these poets. And, first, to compare class with class. The poet in whom individuality predominates will have a more definite influence; he of whom universality is the characteristic, a more wide and lasting one. The influence of *Cowper*, *Milton*, or *Byron*, on individuals is distinct and appreciable; that of *Homer* and *Shakspeare*, almost imperceptible on single minds, is spread silently over ages, and determines the character of the world's literature and the world's feeling.

Comparing each class with itself, and taking first that which we have characterized as the more egoistic, the more popular will be almost always the less pure, because the passionate enthusiasm for what is great and good is

shared by few, comparatively with the power of comprehending the might and force of what we commonly call the passions. Milton is placed with honor on our shelves. We read Byron through and through.

Next, of the poets of nature, Shakspeare, and the very few who can be ranked with him, will be more popular than such as Wordsworth; not because he is greater, though he is, of course, immeasurably, but because his greatness, like that of nature's self, is broken into fragments, and all can find in him something corresponding with their humor. Only a few, like Herschel and Humboldt, can comprehend with something like adequateness the "Cosmos," or Order of the Universe; there is no one who can not read a page of it. And so, very few of those who talk of Shakspeare's greatness, know *how* great he is; but all can mark with pencil-dashes certain lines and detached acts; and if you examined the copy so dashed and marked, you would probably discover what in Shakspeare bears, or was supposed to bear, reference to the reader's own character, or more properly, illustrated his or her private prejudices, peculiarities, and personal history; but, unless a hand as free from egoism as Shakspeare's own had drawn the lines of approval, you would gain from the book of extracts made up of all such passages, not the nature of Man, but the idiosyncrasy of a man. Tell us, therefore, that a man's favorite poet is such as Wordsworth, and we know something about his character; but tell us that he delights in Shakspeare, and we know as yet no more of him than if it had been said that life has joys for him. He may be a Marlborough, or he may be a clown.

Permit me to offer you two pieces of advice, resulting from what has been said.

First, cultivate universality of taste. There is no surer mark of a half-educated mind than the incapacity of admiring various forms of excellence. Men who can not praise Dryden without disparaging Coleridge; nor feel the stern, earthly truthfulness of Crabbe without disparaging the wild, ethereal, impalpable music of Shelley; nor exalt Spenser except by sneering at Tennyson, are precisely the persons to whom it should in consistency seem strange that in God's world there is a place for the eagle and the wren, a separate grace to the swan and the humming-bird, their own fragrance to the cedar and the violet. Enlarge your tastes, that you may enlarge your hearts as well as your pleasures; feel all that is beautiful—love all that is good. The first maxim in religion and in art is—sever yourself from all sectarianism; pledge yourself to no school; cut your life adrift from all party; be a slave to no maxims; stand forth, unfettered and free, servant only to the truth. And if you say, "But this will force each of us to stand alone;" I reply—Yes, grandly alone! untrammelled by the prejudices of any, and free to admire the beauty, and love the goodness of them all.

Secondly, of the writers whom we called egoistic, in whom, that is, the man predominates over the poet, choose such only as are the unfeigned servants of goodness—I do not mean *goodliness*—to be your special favorites. In early life it is, I believe, from this class solely that our favorites are selected; and a man's character and mind are moulded for good or evil far more by the forms of imagination which surround his childhood than by any subsequent scientific training. We can recollect how a couplet from the frontispiece of a hymn-book struck deeper roots into our being, and has borne more manifest fruits, than all the formal training we ever got. Or we can trace, as unerringly as an Indian on the trail, the several influences of each poet through our lives: the sense of unjust destiny which was created by Byron; the taint of Moore's voluptuousness; the hearty, healthful life of Scott; the calming power of Wordsworth; the masculine vigor of Dryden. For it is only in after years that the real taste for the very highest poetry is acquired. Life and experience, as well as mental cultivation, are indispensable. In

earlier life the influence of the man is mightier than that of the poet. Therefore, let every young man especially guard his heart and imagination against the mastery of those writers who sap his vigor and taint his purity.

We propose to name a few of the modes in which poetry does actually influence men :

First, in the way of giving relief to feeling. It is a law of our nature that strong feeling, unexpressed either in words or action, becomes morbid. You need not dread the passionate man, whose wrath vents itself in words; dread the man who grows pale, and suppresses the language of his resentment. There is something in him yet to come out. This is the secret of England's freedom from revolution and conspiracies; she has free discussion. Wrongs do not smoulder silently, to burst forth unexpectedly. Every grievance may have a hearing, and, not being pent up, spends itself before it is dangerous.

The land where, girt by friend or foe,  
A man may speak the thing he will.\*

Now there are feelings which, unuttered, would make a man dangerous—or morbid—or mad—utterance relieves, and, weakening the *feeling*, makes the *man* strong.

To me alone there came a thought of grief;  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
And I again am strong.

For such feelings the poets find us suitable expression. In an artificial state of society, perhaps some young, warlike spirit pines for a more dangerous life than our quiet days give. Well, he reads Scott's border raids, or "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," or "Hohen Lînden," and the vivid forms of imagination receive, as it were, his superfluous energies, and the chafing subsides in unreal battle-fields: or some diseased germ of misanthropy is enlarging in his heart—secret discontent with life; disagreement with the world; conflict between his nature and civil regulations; let him read Byron—a dangerous cure—but in the end a certain one. Byron has said all that can be said upon the subject. What more can be added? There is no restless feeling left behind of something unsaid. Exhaustion follows—then health. For it is a mistake to think that poetry is only good to nurse feeling. It is good for enabling us to *get rid* of feeling for which there is no available field of action. It is the safety-valve to the heart.

It has, besides, an elevating influence. It breaks the monotonous flatness of existence by excitement. Its very essence is that it exalts us, and puts us in a higher mood than that in which we live habitually. And this is peculiarly true of modern poetry. A great critic† has said that the distinction between ancient and modern poetry is, that the characteristic of the former is satisfaction, that of the latter aspiration. To the ancients this time-world was all. To round it with completeness, and hold all powers in harmonious balance, was their whole aim; whereas, Christianity has dwarfed this life in comparison with the thought of an endless existence which it has revealed. To them the thought of death only came as a stimulus to increased enjoyment of that which must soon pass. To us that thought comes moderating and calming all pleasure. And hence the sad, dark character of Christian, especially Northern poetry, as the utterance of a heart which is conscious of eternal discord rather than of perfection of powers; and through it all there vibrates an undertone of melancholy, adding even to mirth a peculiar pathos. Is it not better that it should be so? Does not such poetry, therefore, more peculiarly belong to working-men, whose life is desire, not enjoyment; aspiration, not contentment?

\* Tennyson.

† Schlegel.

Whoever will go into any Gothic cathedral in the evening, knowing nothing of the connoisseurship of architecture, and watch the effect produced on his mind by the lines which wander away, bewildering the eye with the feeling of endlessness, and losing themselves in the dark distances, and will then compare the total impression with that produced by the voluptuous, earthly beauty of a temple like the Madeleine in Paris, will understand, without the help of any scientific jargon, the difference between the ancient idea of satisfaction and the modern one of aspiration.

But when we say poetry elevates, let it not be understood of the improvement of physical comforts. Poetry will not place a man in better circumstances; but it may raise him above his circumstances, and fortify him with inward independence; as Lovelace, the cavalier poet, has very gracefully expressed, in lines written in confinement:

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for a hermitage.

If I have freedom in my love,  
And in my soul am free,  
Angels alone, that soar above,  
Enjoy such liberty.

And yet, as there are some persons who can not conceive of human elevation except as connected with circumstantial condition, I must tell you an anecdote to satisfy even them. A lady, with whose friendship I am honored, was travelling last summer in the Lake district of Cumberland and Westmoreland. Being interested in education, she visited many of the national schools in that country. For the most part the result was uninteresting enough. The heavy looks and stolid intellects which characterize our English agricultural population disappointed her. But in one place there was a striking difference. The children were sprightly, alert, and answered with intelligence all the questions proposed; traced rivers from their sources to the sea, explaining why the towns along their course were of such and such a character, and how the soil had modified the habits and lives of the inhabitants—with much of similar information. The schoolmaster had been educated at one of our great training seminaries. He was invited by the tourist to spend an hour at the hotel; and when, after a long conversation, she expressed her surprise that one so highly educated should bury himself in a retired, unknown spot, with small stipend, teaching only a few rustics, he replied, after some hesitation—"Why, madam, when this situation was first offered me, I was on the point of marriage; and I calculated that it would be worth more to me to live on a small salary, with domestic peace, in the midst of this beautiful scenery, than on a much larger sum in a less glorious spot."

Now there are people who can only estimate the worth of a thing by what it will bring. What is the *use* of poetry? Well, perhaps they may answer that question for themselves, if I have shown that refined taste may be an equivalent for half an income, and a sense of what is beautiful in God's world may make a poor man

Passing rich with forty pounds a-year.

The tendency, again, of poetry is to unite men together. And this both indirectly and directly.

It has been already said that the highest poetry is that which represents the most universal feeling, not the most rare. It is in this sense that Milton's definition makes poetry "simple;" that is, it deals with the feelings which we have in common as men, and not with those which we possess as a particular sort or class of men; with the natural rather than the trained,

artificial, or acquired feelings ; just as the botanist is simple in contrast with the horticulturist. The one seeks what is natural ; and to him nothing in nature is a weed. The other seeks rarities and hot-bed monstrosities.

The Germans say that the world has produced only three poets of first-rate genius : Homer, Shakspeare, and Goethe. This, I suppose, is an exaggeration ; nevertheless, it is true that the highest poets have been, like them, not a class or caste, but of humanity. Take, almost at a venture, the first familiar names that present themselves.

Milton, by all the associations of education and refined tastes, belonged to the royalists and the Church ; but he threw himself, in spite of the vulgarities which repelled him personally from its worship, and left him at last without visible worship, on the side of the conventicle, because in the days of the Stuarts the cause of the conventicle was the cause of liberty and truth.

Dante was a Romanist ; but no slave was he of popery. His world-wide conception represents the heathens and the Christians of all ages as the subjects of one moral government, responsible to the laws impressed upon humanity rather than those written by the Church ; and his severe justice does not scruple to consign a long list of bishops and popes to the eternal penalty of crimes.

Or, again, Byron and Shelley—aristocrats both by birth, yet no minions of a caste, nor champions of hereditary privilege—they were men ; and their power lay in this, that they were the champions of human rights, as well as utterers of the passion that is in men. So far as they are great, they are universal ; so far as they are small or bad, they are narrow and egotistical. And as time rolls on, that which is of self, limited and evil, will become obsolete, and wither, as the mortal warp and woof shrivelled on the arm of Halbert Glendinning, when he plunged it into the sacred flame to grasp the Volume of Truth at the bidding of the “White Lady of Avenel ;” and that of their works which will remain unconsumed will be the living flesh of the humanity that never dies—so much as is true to universal nature and to fact.

It is thus that the poets universalize and unite. “One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.” And hence poetry has been silently doing a work for the poorer classes when they were not aware of it ; for even that poetry which does not interest them may be opening the hearts of the richer classes towards them. Did Burns teach the nobles no sympathy with the cares, and the loves, and the trials of the cotten’s life ? And when poor Hood wrote the “Song of the Shirt,” so touchingly expressive of the sorrows of an unknown class, the overworked needle-woman, and all England thrilled to the appeal :

O men, with sisters dear !  
O men, with mothers and wives !  
• It is not linen you’re wearing out,  
But human creatures’ lives—

and when, in consequence, plan after plan was tried, and investigations instituted, and a kindlier interest evoked to ameliorate their condition, tell us—had poetry done nothing for the working-classes ?

But it has a more direct influence than this in the way of uniting. Chiefly from that power with which the poetic nature is peculiarly gifted of discovering what Shakspeare calls the “soul of goodness in things evil.” Every great poet is a “double-natured man ;” with the feminine and manly powers in harmonious union ; having the tact, and the sympathy, and the intuition, and the tenderness of woman, with the breadth and massiveness of the manly intellect, besides the calm justice which is almost exclusively masculine. For this reason a poet, seeing into the life of things, is not one-sided ; can see the truth which lies at the root of error ; can blame evil without hysterically raving against every doer of it ; distinguishes between frail-



ty and villainy; judges leniently, because by sympathy he can look upon faults as they appear to those who committed them; judges justly, because, so far as he is an artist, he can regard the feeling with which he sympathizes from without; in a double way—realizing it, but not surrendered to it.

I must quote two passages explanatory of the world of meaning contained in those few words of Shakspeare: "the soul of goodness in things evil."

Wordsworth means the same when he says:

'Tis Nature's law  
That none, the meanest of created things,  
Of forms created the most vile and brute,  
The dullest or most noxious, should exist,  
Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,  
A life and soul, to every mode of being  
Inseparably linked. Then be assured  
That least of all can aught—that ever owned  
The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime  
Which man is born to, sink, however depressed,  
So low as to be scorned without a sin;  
Without offense to God cast out of view.

And again:

He who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
That he hath never used: and Thought with him  
Is in its infancy.

One of the best illustrations I can remember of this prerogative of the poet to fasten the attention on what is human and lovable, rather than on what is evil, is Hood's "Bridge of Sighs." This little poem is suggested by the sight of a poor suicide, who has cast herself from one of the London bridges. Prudery, male or female, would turn from such a spectacle with disgust; the disciple of some school of cold divinity would see in it only a text for a discourse on hell. The poet discerns something in it of a deeper mystery, not so flippantly to be solved. He bids you

Touch her not scornfully,  
Think of her mournfully,  
Gently and humanly;  
Not of the stains of her;  
All that remains of her  
Now is pure womanly.  
Make no deep scrutiny  
Into her mutiny  
Rash and undutiful;  
Past all dishonor,  
Death has left on her  
Only the beautiful.

And observe how, with exquisite truthfulness, he fixes your attention, not upon that in which the poor outcast differs from you, but on that in which her sisterhood to the human family consisted—and, for aught *you* may dare to say, still consists:

Wonderment guesses  
Where was her home?  
Who was her father?  
Who was her mother?  
Had she a sister?  
Had she a brother?  
Or was there a nearer one  
Still, and a dearer one  
Yet, than all other?

And mark how—without any feeble sentimentalism, without once confusing the boundaries of right and wrong, without hinting a suspicion that vice is not vice, and wrong not wrong—he simply reminds you that judgment

does not belong to you, a fellow-creature and a sinner ; and bids you place her in the attitude in which alone *you* have a right to regard her now :

Cross her hands humbly,  
As if praying dumbly,  
Over her breast ;  
Owning her weakness,  
Her evil behavior,  
And leaving in meekness  
Her sins to her Saviour.

I should not like to be the woman who could read that poem without something more than sentimental tears, an enlarged humanity, and a deeper justice ; nor should I like to be the man who could rise from the perusal of it without a mighty throb added to the conviction that libertinism is a thing of damnable and selfish cowardice.

Again, poetry discovers good in men who differ from us, and so teaches us that we are one with them. For the poet belongs to the world rather than to his party ; speaks his party's feelings, which are human ; not their watch-words and formulas, which, being forms of the intellect, are transitory, often false, always limited. Thus, Romanism and Puritanism, and their modern feeble descendants, as dogmatic systems, are forbidding enough. But listen to Dante, and you will feel that purgatory, false as a dogma, is true as the symbolism of an everlasting fact of the human soul. Hear Milton sing, and the *heart* of Puritanism is recognized as a noble and a manly thing. And, however repelled you may be by the false metaphysics, the pretensions to infallible interpretations, the cant phrases, and the impotent intolerance which characterize the dwarfed and dwindled Puritanism of our own days, out of which all pith and manhood appear to have departed, who does not feel disposed to be tender to it for Cowper's gentle sake ? However out of date the effort of the Tractarian may seem to you, to reproduce the piety of the past through the forms of the past, instead of striving, like a true prophet, to interpret the aspirations of the present in forms which shall truly represent and foster them, what man is there to whose heart Keble has not shown that in Tractarianism, too, there is a "soul of goodness," a life and a meaning which mere negations can not destroy ?

Lastly, I name the refining influence of poetry. We shall confine our proofs to that which it has already done in making men and life less savage, carnal, and mercenary ; and this especially in the three departments which were the peculiar sphere of the poetry which is called romantic. Beneath its influence, passion became love ; selfishness, honor ; and war, chivalry.

The first of these, as a high sentiment, can only be said to have come into existence with the Christianity of the Middle Ages. All who are familiar with the Greek and Roman poetry know that the sentiment which now bears the name was unknown to the ancients. It became what it is when passion had been hallowed by imagination. Then, and not till then, it became loyalty to female worth, consecrated by religion. For the sacred thought of a Virgin Mother spread its sanctity over the whole idea of the sex. Christianity had given to the world a new object for its imagination ; and the idolatry into which it passed in the Church of Rome was but the inevitable result of the effort of rude minds struggling to express in form the new idea of a divine sacredness belonging to feminine qualities of meekness and purity, which the ages before had overlooked. That this influence of the religious element of the imagination on the earthlier feeling is not fanciful but historical, might be shown in the single case of Ignatius Loyola, on whose ardent temperament the influences of his age worked strongly. Hence it was that there seemed nothing profane when the chivalrous gallantry of the soldier transformed itself by, to him, a most natural transition, into a loyal dedica-

tion of all his powers to One who was "not a countess, nor a duchess, but much greater." But only think how he must have shrunk from this transference of homage, as blasphemous, if his former earthlier feelings had not been elevated by a religious imagination; if, in short, his affections had been like those of the Greeks and Romans!

And while on the subject of the influence of all the higher feelings in elevating passion into that which is unselfish and pure, and even sublime, I will remind you of those glorious lines of Lovelace in reply to a reproach on account of absence caused by duty:

Yet this inconstancy is such  
As you, too, shall adore;  
I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Loved I not honor more.

Under the influence of imagination, selfishness became honor. Doubtless, the law of honor is only half Christian. Yet it did this: it proclaimed the invisible truth above the visible comfort. It consecrated certain acts as right, uncalculatingly, and independently of consequences. It did not say—it will be *better* for you in the end if you do honorably. It said—you *must* do honorably, though it be not better for you to do it, but worse, and deathful. It was not religion; but it was better than the popular, merely prudential, mercenary religion which says "Honesty is the best policy; godliness is gain; do right and you will not lose by it." Honor said, Perhaps you *will* lose—all—life; lose, then, like a man; for there is something higher than life, dearer than even *your* eternal gain. It was not purely religious; for it retained the selfish element. But it was a more refined selfishness which permitted a man to take another's life in defense of his honor, than that which requires him to do it in defense of his purse.

Finally, through poetic imagination war became chivalry. The practice of arms ceased to be "a conflict of kites and crows;" it was guarded by a refined courtesy from every rude and ungenerous abuse of superior strength.

Upon this point there is much sophistry prevalent; therefore it is worth while to see how the matter really stands. A truly great man—the American Channing—has said, I remember, somewhere in his works, that if armies were dressed in a hangman's or a butcher's garb, the false glare of military enthusiasm would be destroyed, and war would be seen in its true aspect as butchery.

It is wonderful how the generous enthusiasm of Dr. Channing has led him into such a sophism. Take away honor, and imagination, and poetry from war, and it becomes carnage. Doubtless. And take away public spirit and invisible principles from resistance to a tax, and Hampden becomes a noisy demagogue. Take away the grandeur of his cause, and Washington is a rebel, instead of the purest of patriots. Take away imagination from love, and what remains? Let a people treat with scorn the defenders of its liberties, and invest them with the symbols of degradation, and it will soon have no one to defend it. This is but a truism.

But it is a falsity if it implies that the mere change of symbolic dress, unless the dress truly represented a previous change of public feeling, would reverse the feeling with which the profession of arms is regarded. So long as people found it impossible to confound the warrior with the hangman, all that a change of garb could do would be to invest the sign with new dignity. Things mean become noble by association; the thistle—the leek—the broom of the Plantagenets—the garter—and the death's head and cross-bones on the front of the Black Brunswickers, typical of the stern resolve to avenge their chief—methinks those symbols did not exactly change the soldier into a sexton!

But the truth is that here, as elsewhere, poetry has reached the truth, while science and common sense have missed it. It has distinguished—as, in spite of all mercenary and feeble sophistry, men ever will distinguish—war from mere bloodshed. It has discerned the higher feelings which lie beneath its revolting features. Carnage is terrible. The conversion of producers into destroyers is a calamity. Death, and insults to woman worse than death—and human features obliterated beneath the hoof of the war-horse—and reeking hospitals, and ruined commerce, and violated homes, and broken hearts—they are all awful. But there is something worse than death. Cowardice is worse. And the decay of enthusiasm and manliness is worse. And it is worse than death, aye, worse than a hundred thousand deaths, when a people has gravitated down into the creed that the “wealth of nations” consists, not in generous hearts—“Fire in each breast, and freedom on each brow”—in national virtues, and primitive simplicity, and heroic endurance, and preference of duty to life; not in MEN, but in silk, and cotton, and something that they call “capital.” Peace is blessed. Peace, arising out of charity. But peace, springing out of the calculations of selfishness, is not blessed. If the price to be paid for peace is this, that wealth accumulate and men decay, better far that every street in every town of our once noble country should run blood!

Through the physical horrors of warfare poetry discerned the redeeming nobleness. For, in truth, when war is not prolonged, the kindling of all the higher passions prevents the access of the baser ones. A nation split and severed by mean religious and political dissensions suddenly feels its unity, and men’s hearts beat together at the mere possibility of invasion. And even woman, as the author of the “History of the Peninsular War” has well remarked, sufferer as she is by war, yet gains, in the more chivalrous respect paid to her, in the elevation of the feelings excited towards her, in the attitude of protection assumed by men, and in the high calls to duty which arouse her from the frivolousness and feebleness into which her existence is apt to sink.

I will illustrate this by one more anecdote from the same campaign to which allusion has been already made—Sir Charles Napier’s campaign against the robber-tribes of Upper Scinde.

A detachment of troops was marching along a valley, the cliffs overhanging which were crested by the enemy. A sergeant, with eleven men, chanced to become separated from the rest by taking the wrong side of a ravine, which they expected soon to terminate, but which suddenly deepened into an impassable chasm. The officer in command signalled to the party an order to return. They mistook the signal for a command to charge; the brave fellows answered with a cheer, and charged. At the summit of the steep mountain was a triangular platform, defended by a breastwork, behind which were seventy of the foe. On they went, charging up one of those fearful paths, eleven against seventy. The contest could not long be doubtful with such odds. One after another they fell; six upon the spot, the remainder hurled backward; but not until they had slain nearly twice their own number.

There is a custom, we are told, among the hillsmen, that when a great chieftain of their own falls in battle, his wrist is bound with a thread either of red or green, the red denoting the highest rank. According to custom, they stripped the dead, and threw their bodies over the precipice. When their comrades came, they found their corpses stark and gashed; but round both wrists of every British hero was twined the red thread!\*

I think you will perceive how poetry, expressing in this rude symbolism unutterable admiration of heroic daring, had given another aspect to war than

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\* “History of the Administration of Scinde,” by Lieut.-Gen. Sir William Napier.

that of butchery; and you will understand how, with such a foe, and such a general as the English commander, who more than once refused battle because the wives and children of the enemy were in the hostile camp, and he feared for their lives, carnage changed its character, and became chivalry; and how it was that the British troops learned to treat their captive women with respect; and the chieftains of the Cutchee hills offered their swords and services with enthusiasm to their conqueror; and the wild hill-tribes, transplanted to the plains, became as persevering in agriculture as they had been before in war.

And now to conclude. They tell us that scenes such as this may be called for in this our England. I do not pretend to judge. We only know that a military nation is at our doors with 450,000 gallant soldiers under arms, every man burning to wipe out the memory of past defeats, with one at their head the prestige of whose name recalls an era of unparalleled brilliancy, many of them trained in a school of warfare where the razzias of Africa have not taught either scrupulosity or mercifulness. We know that a chieftain who is to rule France with any hope of imperial influence can best secure enthusiasm by giving victory to her armies; and that French generals have already specified the way in which—I quote the words of Paixham—a lesson might be taught to England which she should not soon forget.

No one who loves his country—no one who knows what is meant by the *sack of a town*, especially by French soldiers—can contemplate the possibility of such an event, without a fervent hope that that day may never come. Nor does it become us to boast; the enthusiasm of the platform is easy, and costs little; and we may be called upon, before very long, to show by something more than words, whether there be steel in our hearts and hands, or not.

But thus much I will dare to say. If a foreign foot be planted on our sacred soil—if the ring of the rifle of the Chasseurs de Vincennes be heard upon these shores, terrible as the first reverses might be, when discipline could be met only by raw enthusiasm—thanks to gentlemen who have taught us the sublime mysteries of “capital” in lieu of the old English superstitions of Honor and Religion—they may yet chance to learn that British chivalry did not breathe her last at Moodkee, or Ferozeshah, or Sobraon, or Goojerat, or Meeanee, or Hyderabad. They may yet be taught that there is something beyond the raw hysterics of a transient excitement in the spirit of self-sacrifice which we have learned from our Master’s cross. They may yet discover that among the artisans, and peasants, and working-men of England, there are a thousand thousand worthy to be brothers of those heroic eleven who sleep beneath the rocks of Trukkee, with the red thread of honor round their wrists.

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## LECTURE ON WORDSWORTH.

*Delivered to the Members of the Brighton Athenæum, on February 10th, 1853.*

IN order to treat fully the subject which I have to bring before you this evening, I believe there are three points to which I ought principally to direct your attention. The first is, the qualifications necessary for appreciating poetry in general, and for appreciating the poetry of Wordsworth in particular. The second is the character and life of Wordsworth, so far as they bear upon his poetry, and so far as they may have been supposed to have formed or modified his peculiar poetical theories and principles. The third point is,

the theories and poetical principles of Wordsworth, and how far they are true, how far they have been exaggerated, and how far Wordsworth has himself worked out the principles he has laid down.

Now it will be plain that the last of these is the most important point of all; it is, in fact, *the* subject of our consideration; but so many preliminary subjects have presented themselves which must be gone into before we enter upon this, that I have found it necessary to reserve this third topic for a succeeding lecture,\* confining myself on the present occasion merely to the first two points that I have already named.

I have undertaken to lecture this evening upon Wordsworth. To some persons this will appear presumption; to others it will appear superfluous. To all the admirers of Wordsworth's genius it will appear presumption. To these I simply reply, I know well the difficulty of the subject, I know how impossible it is to treat it adequately; I am aware that presumption is implied in the thought, that before it is possible to criticise a man one must sympathize with him, and that to sympathize with a man implies that there is, to a certain extent, a power of breathing the same atmosphere. Nevertheless, I reply that it is with me, at least, a work and labor of love; nor can I believe that any one who has for years studied Wordsworth and loved him, and year by year felt his appreciation and comprehension of Wordsworth grow, and has during all those years endeavored to make Wordsworth's principles the guiding principles of his own inner life—I can not believe that such a man can have nothing to say which it can be desirable should be heard by his fellow-men.

There is another class, however, to whom such a subject will seem superfluous; for the general opinion about Wordsworth is exceedingly superficial. To the mass of the public all that is known of Wordsworth is a conception something like this: They have heard of an old man who lived somewhere in the Lake districts, who raved considerably of Lake scenery, who wrote a large number of small poems, all of them innocent, many of them puerile and much laughed at, at the time they appeared, by clever men; that they were lashed in the reviews, and annihilated by Lord Byron, as, for instance, in those well-known lines:

A drowsy, frowsy poem, called the Excursion,  
Writ in a manner which is my aversion;

and that he was guilty of a vast mass of other verses, all exceeding innocent, and at the same time exceedingly dull and heavy. It is this class of persons whom I ask on the present occasion to listen quietly to the first subject I have to bring before them—the qualifications necessary for appreciating poetry in general and Wordsworth's poetry in particular.

Now the first qualification I shall speak of as necessary for appreciating poetry is unworldliness. Let us understand the term employed. By worldliness, I mean entanglement in the temporal and visible. It is the spirit of worldliness which makes a man love show, splendor, rank, title, and sensual enjoyments; and occupies his attention, chiefly or entirely, with conversations respecting merely passing events and passing acquaintances. I know not that I could give a more distinct idea of what I mean by unworldliness, than by relating an anecdote of a boy of rare genius, inheriting genius from both parents, who, when he began the study of mathematics, was impressed with so strange and solemn a sense of awe, that never before, he said, had he been able to comprehend the existence of the Eternal. It is not difficult to understand what the boy meant. Mathematics contain truths entirely independent of Time and Space; they tell of relations which have no connec-

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\* This lecture was never delivered, owing to Mr. Robertson's ill health.

tion, necessarily, with weight or quality; they deal with the eternal principles and laws of the mind; and it is certain that these laws are more real and eternal than any thing which can be seen or felt. This is what I mean by unworldliness: I am not speaking of it as a theologian or as a religionist, but I am speaking of unworldliness in that sense, of which it is true of all science and high art, as well as of Nature. For all high art is essentially unworldliness, and the highest artists have been unworldly in aim and unworldly in life.

Let us compare the life of Benvenuto Cellini. I name him, because there has been given recently to the public a life of him in a popular form. Let us compare his life with the life of Raphael, or Michael Angelo, or Beethoven, or Canova. You will be struck with this difference, that in Benvenuto Cellini there was an entire absence of any thing like aspiration beyond the Visible and the Seen; but in the life of the others there was the strong and perpetual conviction that the things seen were the things unreal, and that the things unseen were the things real; there was the perpetual desire to realize in a visible form that beauty which the eye had not seen nor the ear heard, nor which it had ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. I will here quote one single passage in illustration of this; it is a translation by Wordsworth himself, from one of the sonnets of Michael Angelo; it is simply an illustration of what I have said:

Heaven-born, the soul a heavenward course must hold;  
Beyond the visible world she soars to seek  
(For what delights the sense is false and weak)  
Ideal form, the universal mould.  
The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest  
In that which perishes; nor will he lend  
His heart to aught which doth on time depend.

This is a view of high art; and in this respect poetry, like high art, and like religion, introduces its votaries into a world of which the senses take no cognizance; therefore I now maintain that until a man's eyes have been clarified by that power which enables him to look beyond the visible; until

He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,  
And on the sightless eyeball pour the day,

poetry—high poetry, like Wordsworth's—is simply and merely unintelligible.

I will give two or three illustrations of the way in which Wordsworth himself looked on this subject. The first is in reference to the power which there is in splendor and in riches to unfit the mind for the contemplation of invisible and spiritual truths. The sonnet I am about to read was written in September, 1802, the period during which the chief part of the poems I shall read this evening were written. I believe it was written to Coleridge.

Oh! friend, I know not which way I must look  
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest  
To think that now our life is only drest  
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,  
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook  
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us.

The connection of these two things is what I wish to fasten your attention upon—

The wealthiest man among us is the best,

that being the spirit of society, then—

No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us.

The second illustration is in reference to what is called scandal or gossip. According to Wordsworth, this is the highest manifestation of a worldly spirit. What is it but conversations respecting passing events or passing acquaintances, unappreciated and unelevated by high principle? Wordsworth has written four sonnets, worthy of deep study, on this subject. After stating the matter in the first of these, in the second he supposes a possible defense against this habit of general conversation respecting others, derisively.

“Yet life,” you say, “is life; we have seen and see,  
And with a lively pleasure we describe;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.  
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee,  
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe.”

Then comes Wordsworth's comment :

Even be it so; yet still among your tribe,  
Our daily world's true worldlings, rank not me!  
Children are blest and powerful; their world lies  
More justly balanced; partly at their feet  
And part far from them: sweetest melodies  
Are those that are by distance made more sweet.  
Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,  
He is a slave; the meanest we can meet!

To understand this, you must carry in your recollection what Wordsworth's views of childhood and infancy are, as given in the sublime “Ode to Immortality.” A child, according to Wordsworth, is a being haunted forever by eternal mind. He tells us that “Heaven lies about us in our infancy”—that the child moves perpetually in two worlds; the world that is seen right before him, and that terminated in another world—a world invisible, the glory of which is as from a palace—“That imperial palace whence he came;” and that high philosophy and poetry are nothing but this coming back to the simple state of childhood, in which we see not merely the thing before us, but the thing before us transfigured and irradiated by the perception of that higher life :

Children are blest and powerful; their world lies  
More justly balanced; partly at their feet,  
And part afar from them.

Then Wordsworth goes on to show how poetry supplies the place which scandal and gossip had occupied.

Dreams, books, are each a world; and books, we know,  
Are a substantial world, both pure and good:  
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,  
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,  
Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
To which I listen with a ready ear;  
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear—  
The gentle lady married to the Moor;  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white lamb.

In other words, scandal is nothing more than inverted love of humanity. An absolute necessity, Wordsworth tells us, exists within us for personal themes of conversation that have reference to human beings, and not to abstract principles; but when that necessity is gratified upon the concerns and occupations of those immediately around us, which necessarily become mixed with envy and evil feelings, then that necessity is inverted and perverted. So the place of detraction or scandal is by the poet occupied in personal themes; as, for example, when a man has made the object of his household thoughts such characters as Desdemona and Spenser's Una, then he has something which



may carry his mind to high and true principles, beyond the present. Then Wordsworth goes on to say :

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
 Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote  
 From evil speaking; rancor, never sought,  
 Comes to me not, malignant truth, nor lie.  
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought:  
 And thus, from day to day my little boat  
 Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably.  
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
 The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays.

I shall now read you a passage from a letter written by Wordsworth to Lady Beaumont, in which he answers the objection that his poems were not popular, and explains the reason why in one sense his poetry never could be popular with the world of fashion.

“It is impossible that any expectations can be lower than mine concerning the immediate effect of this little work upon what is called the public. I do not here take into consideration the envy and malevolence, and all the bad passions, which always stand in the way of a work of any merit from a living poet; but merely think of the pure, absolute, honest ignorance in which all worldlings of every rank and situation must be enveloped with respect to the thoughts, feelings, and images on which the life of my poems depends. The things which I have taken, whether from within or without—what have they to do with routs, dinners, morning calls, hurry from door to door, from street to street, on foot or in carriage; with Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox, Mr. Paul or Sir Francis Burdett, the Westminster election or the borough of Honiton? In a word—for I can not stop to make my way through the hurry of images that present themselves to me—what have they to do with endless talking about things nobody cares any thing for, except as far as their own vanity is concerned, and this with persons they care nothing for, but as their vanity or selfishness is concerned? What have they to do (to say all at once) with a life without love? In such a life there can be no thought; for we have no thoughts (save thoughts of pain) but as far as we have love and admiration.

“It is an awful truth that there neither is, nor can be, any genuine enjoyment of poetry among nineteen out of twenty of those persons who live, or wish to live, in the broad light of the world—among those who either are, or are striving to make themselves, people of *consideration* in society. This is a truth, and an awful one; because to be incapable of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God.

“Upon this I shall insist elsewhere; at present, let me confine myself to my object, which is to make you, my dear friend, as easy-hearted as myself with respect to these poems. Trouble not yourself upon their present reception: of what moment is that, compared with what I trust is their destiny? to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think, and feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous—this is their office, which I trust they will faithfully perform long after we (that is, all that is mortal of us) are mouldered in our graves.”

And then, after some striking criticisms and analyses of his own poetry, he continues :

“Be assured that the decision of these persons has nothing to do with the question; they are altogether incompetent judges. These people, in the senseless hurry of their idle lives, do not *read* books; they merely snatch a glance at them that they may talk about them. And even if this were not

so, never forget what, I believe, was observed to you by Coleridge—that every great and original writer, in proportion as he is great or original, must himself create the taste by which he is to be relished; he must teach the art by which he is to be seen; this, in a certain degree, even to all persons, however wise and pure may be their lives, and however unvitiated their taste. But for those who dip into books in order to give an opinion of them, or talk about them to take up an opinion—for this multitude of unhappy, and misguided, and misguiding beings, an entire regeneration must be produced; and if this be possible, it must be a work of *time*. To conclude, my ears are stone-dead to this idle buzz, and my flesh as insensible as iron to these petty stings; and, after what I have said, I am sure yours will be the same. I doubt not that you will share with me an invincible confidence that my writings (and among them these little poems) will co-operate with the benign tendencies in human nature and society, wherever found; and that they will, in their degree, be efficacious in making men wiser, better, and happier.”

In a subsequent letter to Sir George Beaumont, he says: “Let the poet first consult his own heart, as I have done, and leave the rest to posterity—to, I hope, an improving posterity. \* \* \* \* I have not written down to the level of superficial observers and unthinking minds. Every great poet is a teacher; I wish either to be considered as a teacher, or nothing.”

So far have I tried to prove my point. If my allegations are true, then it follows that a man whose life is choked up by splendor and by riches—a man whose sympathies are perverted by detraction and by gossip—a man whose object is in life to have for himself merely a position in what is called fashionable life—such a man is simply *incapable* of understanding the highest poetry.

The second qualification I shall name for the appreciation of poetry is, feelings trained and disciplined by the truth of Nature. Let us understand this matter. Poetry represents things not as they are, but as they seem; and herein it coincides with all high art, for the difference between science and poetry is this—that science and philosophy endeavor to give to us things as they are, art and poetry represent to us things as they seem. Let us take a simple illustration. The painter represents his distant mountains blue, he gives us the distant circle in the oval of perspective, not because they are so, but because they seem so.

Now, in the same way, just as there are perverted senses to which all things seem unreal, and diseased or morbid senses to which, for example, there is no difference between green and scarlet, and as a man who has represented the glaring and glittering as beautiful, would yet find many who admired him, so, in the same way, in a matter of taste or poetry, there will be found minds perverted by convention, or injured by mere position, to whom Humanity and the Universe will not appear in their true colors, but rather falsely. Mere poets of fashion will have their admirers, just so far as there are those who are found like them, and just so far as their powers are great. For it must be remembered that if a thing seems such to a man, and he has the art of representing it as it seems, he is a great poet in the first instance, and if a man has that power to an eminent degree, he is a greater poet; but the question whether he is a true poet or not depends not upon *how* what he represented appeared to him, but upon the question whether it *ought* so to have appeared to him, or whether it does so appear to human nature in its most unsophisticated and purest mood. Then comes the difficulty—what shall be the test? If things seem to one man thus, and if they seem to another man thus, who shall tell us which is true and which is false poetry, and bring us back to a standard by which we may determine what is the judgment of human nature in its most unsophisticated mood? The tests are two. The first is feelings disciplined by Nature, the second is feelings disci-

plined through the minds of the acknowledged great masters and poets. The first test I have named is feelings disciplined by Nature; for as in matters of art, there are a variety of tastes; it does not necessarily follow that there is no real test or standard of taste.

And just as the real standard is not the standard of the mass—is not judged by the majority of votes, but is decided by the few—so, in matters of poetry, it is not by the mass or by the majority of votes that these things can be tested; but they are to be tested by the pure, and simple, and true in heart—by those who, all their life-long, have been occupied in the discipline of feeling; for in early life poetry is a love, a passion; we care not for quality, we care only for quantity; the majesty and pomp of diction delight us; we love the mere mellifluous flow of the rhyme; and this any one will understand who has heard the boy in the playground spouting, in school-boy phraseology, his sonorous verses. And so, as life goes on, this passion passes; the love for poetry wanes, the mystic joy dies with our childhood, and other and more real objects in life and business occupy our attention. After twenty a man no longer loves poetry passionately; and at fifty or sixty, if you apply to a man for his judgment, you will find it to be that which was his when a boy. The thirty years that have intervened have been spent in undisciplined feeling, and the taste of the boy is still that of the man—imperfect and undisciplined.

The other test to which I will refer is the judgment of the mind that has been formed on the highest models. The first test I have spoken of is, of course, Nature seen and felt at first-hand; the second test is Nature seen through the eyes of those who by universal consent are reckoned to have seen Nature best; and without these it is utterly impossible that a man can judge well.

“These two things, contradictory as they seem, must go together—manly dependence and manly independence, manly reliance and manly self-reliance. Nor can there be given to a thinking man any higher or wiser rule than this—to trust to the judgment of those who from all ages have been reckoned great; and if he finds that any disparity or difference exists between his judgment and theirs, let him, in all modesty, take it for granted that the fault lies in him, and not in them; for, as a great poet interprets himself to us, he is himself necessary to himself, and we must love him ere to us he will seem worthy of our love.” These lines are Wordsworth’s, and of no man are they more true than of himself. If you come to Wordsworth in order to find fault, and criticise, and discover passages that can be turned into ridicule or parodied, you will find abundant materials for your mood; but if, on the other hand, in reliance on the judgment of some of the best and wisest of this age, you will take it for granted that there is something there to learn, and that he can and will teach you how to think and how to feel, I answer for it you will not go away disappointed.

And here lies the great difficulty, the peculiar difficulty of our age; that it is an age of cant without love, of criticism without reverence. You read the magazines, and the quarterlies, and the daily newspapers, you see some slashing article, and after you have perused that article, in which the claims of some great writer have been discussed cursorily and superficially, you take it for granted that you understand, and can form a judgment upon the matter; and yet, all the while, very likely that article has been written by some clever, flippant young man, to whom, for his own misfortune, and for the misfortune of the public, the literary department has been committed. What we want is the old spirit of our forefathers; the firm conviction that not by criticism, but by sympathy, we must understand; what we want is more reverence, more love, more humanity, more depth.

The third qualification I shall name for an appreciation of poetry is, a cer-

tain delicacy and depth of feeling. I do not say that this is necessary for all poets—nay, even for some of the highest it is not necessary; for the epic poet appeals to all minds, he describes things which are applicable to all; the dramatic poet appeals to all, because, although unquestionably some of his characters move in an atmosphere that is unintelligible to the mass, yet in the multiplicity of characters he produces there must be a majority that are intelligible to all; the poet of passion appeals to all, because passions are common to us all. It does not require, for example, much delicacy or profoundness to understand and feel the writings of Anacreon Moore; but there are poets who give us truths which none can appreciate but those who have been engaged in watching faithfully the order in which feelings succeed each other, the successions of our inner life, the way in which things appear in this world when presented to our mind in our highest state. No man needs this discipline and preparation more than the student of Wordsworth, for he gives to us the subtle and pure and delicate and refined succession of human feelings, of which the mind is scarcely conscious, except at the moment when the figure is before us, and we are listening with stilled breath to the mysterious march of our inner life.

I will now proceed to give you a few examples of this; but you will observe that I labor under peculiar disadvantages in doing so; for just in proportion as thoughts are delicate and refined and subtle, exactly in the same proportion are they unfit for public exposition; they may be fitted for the closet, the study, and for private reading, but they are not fitted for a public room; therefore, the most exquisite productions of Wordsworth I shall not bring before you now; all I shall read to you will be some that will give you a conception of what I have stated. For example, I quote one passage in which the poet describes the consecrating effects of early dawn:

What soul was his when from the naked top  
Of some bold headland he beheld the sun  
Rise up and bathe the world in light! He look'd—  
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay  
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touch'd,  
And in their silent faces did he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank  
The spectacle; sensation, soul, and form  
All melted into him; They swallowed up  
His animal being; In them did he live,  
And by them did he live; They were his life.  
In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the Living God.  
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired;  
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;  
Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power  
That made him; it was blessedness and love!

There is nothing in these lines except we have the heart to feel them. No man can understand or feel those lines who has led a slothful life, or who has not at one time or other loved to rise early—no man who, in his early walks, has not mingled with a love of poetry a deep religious sense, who has not felt the consecrating effects of early dawn, or who has not at one time or another, in his early days, in a moment of deep enthusiasm, knelt down amidst the glories of Nature, as the ancient patriarch knelt, canopied only by the sky above him, and feeling that none were awake but the Creator and himself—bowed down to consecrate and offer up the whole of his life, experiencing also a strange, and awful, and mysterious feeling, as if a Hand invisible was laid upon his brow, accepting the consecration and the sacrifice.

In order to understand the next passage I shall quote, I must remind you of the way in which the ancient Pagans represented the same feeling. Most persons here, either through the originals, if they are acquainted with them, or through the translations, which in these times have multiplied, will remember how the ancient Pagan poets loved to represent some anecdote of a huntsman or shepherd, who, in passing through a wood and plucking some herb, or cutting down some branch, has started to see drops of human blood issue from it, or at hearing a human voice proclaiming that he had done injury to some imprisoned human life in that tree. It was so that the ancients expressed their feelings of the deep sacredness of that life that there is in Nature. Now let us see how Wordsworth expresses this. As usual, and as we might have expected, he brings it before us by a simple anecdote of his childhood, when he went out nutting. He tells us how, in early boyhood, he went out to seek for nuts, and came to a hazel-tree set far in the thicket of a wood, which never had been entered by the profane steps of boyhood before—as he expresses it, “A virgin scene.” He describes how he eyed with delight the clusters of white nuts hanging from the branches, and with exquisite fidelity to nature, he tells us how he sat upon a bank and dallied with the promised feast, as we dally with a letter long expected, and containing correspondence much loved, because we know it is our own. At last the boy rose, tore down the boughs, and on seeing all the ravage and desolation he had caused by his intrusion, there came over him a feeling of deep remorse.

And unless I now  
 Confound my present feelings with the past;  
 Ere from the mutilated bower I turned  
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
 The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.  
 Then, dearest maiden, move along these shades  
 In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the wood.

I preface the third illustration that I shall offer, by a remark reminding you that these scenes of Nature become, as it were, a possession of the memory. The value of having felt Nature in her loveliness or in her grandeur is not in the pleasure and intense enjoyment that was then and there experienced, but in this fact, that we have thenceforward gained something that will not be put aside; a remembrance that will form a great part of our future life. Now all of us—any man who has seen the Alps, or who has seen an American hurricane—can understand this so far as Nature's grandeur is concerned; but Wordsworth, as usual, shows us how our daily life and most ordinary being is made up of such recollections; and, as usual, he selects a very simple anecdote to illustrate this. It is taken from a circumstance that occurred to him when, on a journey with his sister on the Lake of Ullswater, they came upon a scene which, perhaps, few but himself would have observed. The margin of the lake was fringed for a long distance with golden daffodils,

Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

And then, after describing this in very simple language, these lines occur:

The waves beside them danced; but they  
 Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;  
 A poet could not but be gay,  
 In such a jocund company:  
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
 What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie,  
 In vacant or in pensive mood,

They flash upon that inward eye,  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

Now I will give you a specimen of shallow criticism. In a well-known "Review" for the current quarter there is a review of Wordsworth: and among other passages there is one in which the reviewer, with a flippancy which characterizes the whole of the article, remarks that the passage which has just been read is nothing more than a versified version of a certain entry in Miss Wordsworth's journal. How stands the fact? It is unquestionably true that there was an entry in Miss Wordsworth's journal, written in very striking prose, of the same sight which her brother and herself had seen; it is quite true that the first two stanzas and the greater part of the third were nothing more than Miss Wordsworth's very beautiful prose put into very beautiful verse. So far, then, if you strike off the last stanza and the two lines of the stanza preceding it, you have nothing more than a versified version of the entry in Miss Wordsworth's journal; but then the last stanza contains the very idea of all, towards which all tended, and without which the piece would not have been poetry at all. What would you think of a man who denied to Shakspeare the praise of originality, on the ground that his plays were chiefly constructed from some ancient chronicler, Holingshed, for example, or taken from the plot of some old play, and that in every play he had incorporated some hundred lines of the old play? What has Shakspeare added? Only the *genius*; he has only added the breath and life which made the dry bones of the skeleton live. What has Wordsworth added? He has added nothing except the *poetry*; nothing but the thought, the one lovely thought, which redeems the whole.

Now I have quoted the passages you have heard, in order to call your attention to the subtle perception and the exquisite delicacy which is in them. I have reminded you of the difficulty I encounter in bringing them before a public audience. In reading Wordsworth the sensation is as the sensation of the pure-water drinker, whose palate is so refined that he can distinguish between rill and rill, river and river, fountain and fountain, as compared with the obtuser sensation of him who has destroyed the delicacy of his palate by grosser libations, and who can distinguish no difference between water and water, because to him all pure things are equally insipid. It is like listening to the mysterious music in the conch sea-shell, which is so delicate and refined that we are uncertain whether it is the music and sound of the shell, or merely the pulses throbbing in our own ear; it is like watching the quivering rays of fleeting light that shoot up to heaven as we are looking at the sunset; so fine, so exquisitely touching is the sense of feeling, that we doubt whether it is reality we are gazing upon at all, or whether it is not merely an image created by the power and the trembling of our own inner imagination.

I will pass on now, in the second place, to consider the life of Wordsworth, so far as it may be considered to have affected his poetry. We all know that Wordsworth was remarkable for certain theories of poetry, which in his time, when they first appeared, were considered new, heterodox, heretical. On a future occasion I hope to examine these; at present I am bound to endeavor to investigate the question, how far Wordsworth's life and Wordsworth's character may be supposed to have formed, or, at all events, modified, these conclusions.

Now, first of all, I will remark that Wordsworth's was a life of contemplation, not of action, and therein differed from Arnold's of Rugby. Arnold of Rugby is the type of English action; Wordsworth is the type of English thought. If you look at the portraits of the two men, you will distinguish this difference: In one there is concentrativeness, energy, proclaimed; in

the eye of the other there is vacancy, dreaminess. The life of Wordsworth was the life of a recluse. In these days it is the fashion to talk of the dignity of work as the one sole aim and end of human life, and foremost in proclaiming this as a great truth we find Thomas Carlyle. Every man who pretends in any degree to have studied the manifold tendencies of this age will be familiar with the writings of Carlyle, and there can be no man who has studied them who does not recollect the vivid and eloquent passage in which Carlyle speaks of the sacredness of work. Now it appears to me that this word is passing almost into cant among the disciples of Carlyle; and even with Carlyle himself in these Latter-day pamphlets, in which he speaks of every thing and every one not engaged in present work, as if the sooner they were out of this work-a-day world the better. In opposition to this, I believe that as the vocation of some is naturally work, so the vocation, the heaven-born vocation of others, is naturally contemplation.

In very early times human life was divided into seven parts, whereof six were given to work and one to rest, and both of these were maintained equally sacred—sacred work and sacred rest; and it is not uprooting that great principle, but carrying it out in its spirit, to say that, as of the seven parts of human life the majority belonged to work, so should a fraction be dedicated to rest; that though it is true of the majority that the life-law is work, yet it is also true that there is a fraction to whom by nature the life-law is the law of contemplation. But let no one suppose that contemplation, in the Wordsworthian sense of the word, is listlessness or inaction. There is a sweat of the brain and a sweat of the heart, be well assured—working-men especially—as much as there is a sweat of the brow; and contemplation, in Wordsworth's sense of the word, is the dedicating a life to the hard and severe inner work of brain; it is the retiring from the world, in order to fit the spirit to do its work.

Let us understand what this work was which Wordsworth proposed to himself. At the period when Wordsworth came upon the stage, there were two great tendencies—and, in some respects, evil tendencies—which civilization and modern society were beginning to develop. The first of these was the accumulation of wealth; the second was the division of labor.

I am not going to speak of the accumulation of wealth as a fanatic. I know some who say, with reference to wealth and capital, that wealth is a necessary ingredient in the production of things, of which labor is the other ingredient, and without which labor will be altogether useless. I know that no nation has ever risen to greatness without accumulated capital; and yet, notwithstanding this, there is a crisis in the history of nations—and a dangerous crisis it is—when the aristocracy of birth has been succeeded by the aristocracy of wealth; and a great historian tells us, that no nation has ever yet reached that crisis without having *already* begun its downward progress towards deterioration.

There are chiefly, I believe, three influences counteractive of that great danger—accumulated wealth. The first is religion, the second is hereditary rank, and the third is the influence of men of contemplative lives. The first is religion, of which, as belonging to another place, for the sake of reverence, I will not speak here. The second counteracting influence to accumulated wealth is hereditary rank. It is not generally the fashion in the present day to speak highly of rank, much less before the members of an Athenæum or of a Working-man's Institute; it is the fashion, rather, to speak of our common humanity, and to deprecate rank; and good and right it is that common humanity should be dignified, and elevated far above the distinction of convention and all the arbitrary and artificial differences of class; and yet, after all this, in an age when it certainly is not the fashion to speak well of hereditary rank, it is well for us all to remember the advantages that have ac-

crued to us in the past from that hereditary rank. I will say that rank is a power in itself more spiritual, because less tangible, than the power of wealth. The man who commands others by the extent of his broad acres, or by the number of his bales of cotton, rules them by a power more degrading and more earthly than he who rules them simply by the *prestige* of long hereditary claims.

You all remember how well Sir Walter Scott has described this power as existing more strongly among the Highlanders of Scotland than in any other nation. In the "Fair Maid of Perth," for example, in the contest between the clans, you will remember how every clansman dedicated himself to certain death for the sake of his chieftain, and how a young man, with no wealth, unknown before, nay, having in himself no intrinsic worth or goodness, obtained a loyalty and devotion that royalty itself could scarcely win; a devotion and love that all the wealth of the burghers of Perth never could have purchased; and you feel that so long as there was such a power in Scotland it was impossible that the burghers of Perth, with all their wealth, could obtain undisputed predominancy. So long as this power exists, the power of wealth has something to be thrown in the scale against it; and therefore it is that, with feelings strong on the side of human progress, and with but little reverence for mushroom rank, I am yet free to acknowledge that I feel sometimes a pang when I hear or read of the extinction of great names, gray with the hoar of innumerable ages—sorrow, when I read in paper after paper of the passing of great ancestral estates under the hammer of the auctioneer; and for this reason, that in every such case I feel that there is one more sword gone that would have helped us in the battle which we must all fight against the superstitious idolatry of wealth.

The third counteracting influence is the existence of men of contemplative minds—men of science and philosophy. You may call them useless; but they are men whose vocation elevates them above the existing world, and makes them indifferent to show and splendor, and therefore they can throw their influence and weight in the scale against the aristocracy of wealth. The other evil I have spoken of, I called the division of labor; and here, again, I speak not as a fanatic. Political economists—Adam Smith, for example—tell us that in the fabrication of a pin from ten to eighteen men are required. One cuts the wire, another draws it, a third points it, three are required to make the head, another to polish it, and it is a separate work even to put the pin into the paper. And now we know the advantage of all this.

The political economist tells us that ten such men working together can make in a single day forty or fifty thousand pins, whereas, had they worked separately, they could scarcely have made ten. We all know the advantage of this; we know that a man becomes more expert by directing his whole attention to one particular branch of a trade than by wasting it on many; we know that time is thus saved, which would otherwise be spent in going from one work to another; we know that the inventive faculty is consequently quickened, because a man who is forever considering one subject only is also enabled to occupy his attention with the thought as to how the operation can be most simplified. These are great advantages; yet no man can persuade me that with these advantages there are not also great disadvantages to the *inner life* of the man so engaged. We get a perfect pin, but we get most imperfect *men*, for while one man is engaged in polishing the pin, and another is engaged in sharpening it, what have we? We have nothing more in the man than a pin-polisher; we have sacrificed the man to the pin.

In some of the States of Western America, we are told of men who, by the very facts of their position, are compelled to clear their own ground, to sow and reap it with their own hands, to thatch and build their own cottages, and to break and shoe their own horses, and who give a great deal of atten-



tion, notwithstanding, to the consideration of great questions, commercial and political. This is, no doubt, an imperfect society, for every thing is incomplete; and yet travellers tell us that there are nowhere such specimens of humanity; that the men have not only large brains and large muscles, but both these joined together. On the one hand, then, we have a more complete society and a less complete individual; on the other, hand, we have a more complete individual and a less complete society. This is the disadvantage, this is the high price we must pay for all civilization and progress; in the words of Tennyson, "The individual withers, and the world is more and more." And then life is so divided; we have the dentist and the oculist, but they are only the dentist and the oculist; we have the clergyman and the farmer, but the farmer knows nothing of the clergyman; and is it not a charge brought against the clergy at this very moment, that they are clergymen and nothing more?

No man felt these two dangers more than Wordsworth felt them; he felt himself called upon to do battle against the evils of his age; he acknowledged that he had received a commission and consecration; he was, as we have already heard, "a consecrated spirit;" and yet he took a fair and just measure of his own powers; he knew well that his work was not to be done on the platform, in the pulpit, or in the senate. He retired to his own mountains, and there, amidst the regenerating influences of nature, where all was real, he tried to discipline his own heart in order that he might be enabled to look calmly and truly on the manifold aspects of human life. And from that solitude there came from time to time a calm clear voice, calling his countrymen back to simplicity and truth, proclaiming the dignity and the simplicity in feeling of our primitive nature; in opposition to the superstitious idolatry of wealth, proclaiming from time to time that a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things he possesses; in opposition to the danger arising from divided employment and occupations, proclaiming the sanctity of each separate human soul, and asserting, in defiance of the manufacturer, who called men "hands," that every man was not a "hand," but a living soul.

It was in this way that Wordsworth advocated the truth of poetry. He did a great, and high, and holy work, the value of which must not be calculated nor measured by his success, but by its truth. The work Wordsworth did, and I say it in all reverence, was the work which the Baptist did when he came to the pleasure-laden citizens of Jerusalem to work a reformation; it was the work which Milton tried to do, when he raised that clear, calm voice of his to call back his countrymen to simpler manners and to simpler laws. That was what Wordsworth did, or tried to do; and the language in which he had described Milton might with great truth be applied to Wordsworth himself:

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtne, freedom, power.  
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart:  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free.  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

I will now read to you one or two passages in which Wordsworth shows the power of this life of contemplation. The first I shall read is one written by Wordsworth soon after the Convention of Cintra. According to Words-

worth's view, England had been guilty in that Convention of great selfishness. It appeared to Wordsworth that, instead of using the opportunity given her to ransom Portugal and Spain, she had consulted her own selfishness, and allowed her enemy, the French, to escape with a retreat almost equal to victory. In consequence of this, Wordsworth wrote a tract, in one passage of which he defended himself for pretending to judge of such matters. He says: "The evidence to which I have made appeal, in order to establish the truth, is not locked up in cabinets, but is accessible to all; as it exists in the bosoms of men—in the appearances and intercourse of daily life—in the details of passing events—and in general history. And more especially in its right import within the reach of him who, taking no part in public measures, and having no concern in the changes of things but as they affect what is most precious in his country and humanity, will doubtless be more alive to those genuine sensations which are the materials of sound judgment. Nor is it to be overlooked that such a man may have more leisure (and probably will have a stronger inclination) to communicate with the records of past ages."

I will take one other passage, in which, judging of the affairs of Spain with almost perfect nicety, Wordsworth again appealed to the power and right given to him, by contemplation, to judge of such a subject:

Not mid the world's vain objects, that enslave  
 The free-born soul—that world whose vaunted skill  
 In selfish interest perverts the will,  
 Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave—  
 Not there; but in dark wood, and rocky cave,  
 And hollow vale, which foaming torrents fill  
 With omnipresent murmur as they rave  
 Down their steep beds, that never shall be still:  
 Here, mighty nature! in this school sublime,  
 I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain,  
 For her consult the auguries of time;  
 And through the human heart explore my way,  
 And look and listen—gathering, whence I may,  
 Triumph and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

The second great feature in Wordsworth's life and history was his fidelity to himself. Early in life he felt himself a consecrated spirit, bound to be such, else sinning greatly. He said that he made no vows, but that, unknown to him, vows were made for him. Wordsworth felt that he had what we call in modern times a vocation or a mission, and no man was ever more true to his vocation than Wordsworth; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; he recognized the voice within him and obeyed it; and no wish for popularity, no dazzling invitations to a brighter life, could ever make him break his vows or leave his solitude. The generosity of a few private friends—Calvert, Beaumont, Lord Lonsdale—enabled him to live in retirement; but when he was afterwards invited to leave his seclusion for a town life he refused, because he felt that that would destroy the simplicity he was cultivating.

Wordsworth was no copyist; upon himself he formed himself. He took no model; he took the powers and light which were in him, and worked them out. This will account for what some writers called the fanatical egotism of the Lake writers. Egotism, if you will; but there is many a man who is wasting his energies who has, nevertheless, the power within him to be something, if he will only not try to be something which he can not be—if he will only be content to be what he is within himself, instead of aiming at some model it is impossible for him ever to realize. Abstractedly, no doubt, the armor of the warrior was better than the sling of the shepherd; but for the shepherd the shepherd's sling was best. And so Wordsworth worked out his history, destiny, and life; and, after all, when you look at it,

in his case it was not egotism. Wordsworth said that he made no vows; vows were made for him. And here is the difference between the egotist and the humility of the great man; the egotist is ever speaking and thinking of that which belongs to himself alone and comes from himself; but the great man, when speaking of himself or thinking of himself, is convinced that which is in him is not his own, but a Voice to which he must listen, and to which, at his peril, he must yield obedience. There has ever been to me something exceedingly sublime in the spectacle of Wordsworth, through obloquy, through long years, through contempt, still persevering in his calm, consistent course—something sublime in those expressions which afterwards turned out to be a prophecy, in which, indifferent to present popularity, he looked towards the future. His friends, who loved him, his brothers, who adored him, were unsatisfied with the public opinion. "Make yourselves at rest respecting me," said Wordsworth; "I speak the truths the world must feel at last." There are not many passages in Wordsworth's Works that bear upon his feelings during this time, and there is only one passage I will read to you now. It is that ode he wrote to Haydon:

High is our calling, friend! Creative art  
 (Whether the instrument of words she use,  
 Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues)  
 Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
 Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
 Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
 Faith in the whispers of the lonely muse,  
 While the whole world seems adverse to desert.  
 And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,  
 Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,  
 Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
 And in the soul admit of no decay,  
 Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness:  
 Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!

This brings me to consider Wordsworth in his success as a poet. The cause of Wordsworth, which was desperate once, is triumphant now; and yet it is well to look back to fifty years ago, and to remember how it was with him then. Wordsworth's biographer informs us that between 1807 and 1815 there was not one edition of his works called for. The different reviews sneered at him, Jeffrey lashed him, Byron tried to annihilate him; and it was in reference to some such attempt of Byron that Southey said, "He crush the Excursion! he might as well attempt to crush Mount Skiddaw!" It was about that time that Fox returned a calm, cold, unsympathizing answer to the inclosure of a volume of Wordsworth's poems which Wordsworth had sent; and then also occurred one circumstance which was full of significance. Cottle, the bookseller of Bristol, made over his stock and effects to the Messrs. Longman, and it was necessary to take an inventory of the stock, and in that inventory was found one volume noted down as worth "*nil*." That volume contained the lyric poems of Wordsworth; and it may be well, also, to say that it contained first of all Coleridge's poem of the "Ancient Mariner," and afterwards those exquisite lines of Wordsworth on "Revisiting Tintern Abbey."

Thirty years after this, the then Prime-Minister of England, Sir Robert Peel, in a letter full of dignified, and touching, and graceful feeling, proffered to Wordsworth the laureateship of England; acknowledging, in addition, that though he had mentioned the subject not to few, but to many persons, and not to men of small, but to men of great reputation, there was but one unanimous opinion, that the selection was the only one that could be made.

I remember myself one of the most public exhibitions of this change in public feeling. It was my lot, during a short-university career, to witness a transition and a reaction, or revulsion, of public feeling, with respect to two

great men whom I have already mentioned and contrasted. The first of these was one who was every inch a man—Arnold of Rugby. You will all recollect how in his earlier life Arnold was covered with suspicion and obloquy; how the wise men of his day charged him with latitudinarianism, and I know not with how many other heresies. But the public opinion altered, and he came to Oxford and read lectures on modern history. Such a scene had not been seen in Oxford before. The lecture-room was too small; all adjourned to the Oxford theatre; and all that was most brilliant, all that was most wise and most distinguished, gathered together there. He walked up to the rostrum with a quiet step and manly dignity. Those who had loved him when all the world despised him, felt that at last the hour of their triumph had come. But there was something deeper than any personal triumph they could enjoy; and those who saw him then will not soon forget the lesson read to them by his calm, dignified, simple step—a lesson teaching them the utter worthlessness of unpopularity, or of popularity, as a test of manhood's worth.

The second occasion was when, in the same theatre, Wordsworth came forward to receive his honorary degree. Scarcely had his name been pronounced, than from three thousand voices at once there broke forth a burst of applause, echoed and taken up again and again when it seemed about to die away, and that thrice repeated—a cry in which

Old England's heart and voice unite,  
Whether she hail the wine-cup or the fight,  
Or bid each hand be strong, or bid each heart be light.

There were young eyes there, filled with an emotion of which they had no need to be ashamed; there were hearts beating with the proud feeling of triumph that at last the world had recognized the merit of the man they had loved so long, and acknowledged as their teacher; and yet when that noise was protracted, there came a reaction in their feelings, and they began to perceive that *that* was not, after all, the true reward and recompense for all that Wordsworth had done for England; it seemed as if all that noise was vulgarizing the poet; it seemed more natural and desirable to think of him afar off in his simple dales and mountains, the high-priest of Nature, weaving in honored poverty his songs to liberty and truth, than to see him there clad in a scarlet robe and bespattered with applause. Two young men went home together, part of the way in silence, and one only gave expression to the feelings of the other when he quoted those well-known, trite, and often-quoted lines—lines full of deepest truth—

The self-approving hour whole worlds outweighs  
Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas:  
And more true joy Marcellus exiled feels  
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

The last thing I shall remark on respecting Wordsworth's life was Wordsworth's consistency. I shall here quote a passage in which he alludes to the charge brought against him of having deserted his former opinions. "I should think that I had lived to little purpose if my notions on the subject of government had undergone no modification: my youth must, in that case, have been without enthusiasm, and my manhood endued with small capability of profiting by reflection. If I were addressing those who have dealt so liberally with the words renegade, apostate, etc., I should retort the charge upon them, and say, *you* have been deluded by *places* and *persons*, while I have stuck to *principles*." It may appear to many persons a desperate thing to defend Wordsworth's consistency in the very teeth of facts; for it is unquestionable that in his early life Wordsworth was a republican, and sympathized with the French Revolution, and that in his later life he wrote lines of

stern condemnation for its excesses. It is unquestionable, moreover, that in early life Wordsworth rebelled against any thing like ecclesiastical discipline; that he could not even bear the morning and evening prayers at chapel, and yet that in later life he wrote a large number of ecclesiastical sonnets, of which I will at present only quote one on Archbishop Laud:

Prejudged by foes determined not to spare  
 An old weak man for vengeance thrown aside,  
 Laud, 'in the painful art of dying' tried  
 (Like a poor bird entangled in a snare,  
 Whose heart still flutters, though his wings forbear  
 To stir in useless struggle), hath relied  
 On hope that conscious innocence supplied,  
 And in his prison breathes celestial air.  
 Why tarries then thy chariot? wherefore stay,  
 O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels,  
 Which thou preparest, full often to convey  
 (What time a state with maddening faction reels)  
 The saint or patriot to the world that heals  
 All wounds, all perturbations doth allay.\*

So that Wordsworth began as a Republican and ended as a Tory; he began in defiance of every thing ecclesiastical, and ended as a High-Churchman. This change has been viewed by persons of different parties with different sentiments. To some, as to the poet Shelley, it appeared an apostasy from the purity of his earlier principles; to others, as if the sacredness of his earlier principles had been ripened with the mellowed strength of manly life. Among these last is his biographer, Dr. Wordsworth; and it is curious to see what pains he has taken to point to some passage by which the evil of another might be modified—aiming at one great and chief object, namely, to prove that Wordsworth died a Tory and a High-Churchman. Be it so; I am prepared to say that the inner life of Wordsworth was consistent. In order to prove this, let us bear in mind that there are two kinds of truth—the one is the truth of fact, the other is ideal truth; and these are not one, they are often opposite to each other. For example, when the agriculturist sees a small white almond-like thing rising from the ground, he calls that an oak; but that is not a truth of fact, it is an ideal truth. The oak is a large tree, with spreading branches, and leaves, and acorns; but that is only a thing an inch long, and imperceptible in all its development; yet the agriculturist sees in it the idea of what it shall be, and, if I may borrow a scriptural phrase, he *imputes* to it the majesty, and excellence, and glory, that is to be hereafter.

Let us carry this principle into the change of Wordsworth's principles. In early life Wordsworth was a democrat; an admirer of the French Revolution; he sympathized deeply, manfully, with the cause of the poor; he loved them, and desired their elevation. But he sympathized with them as the stately nobles of nature; he saw in them, not what they were, but what they might be; and in all Wordsworth's peddlers, and broom-gatherers, and gypsies, and

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\* Wordsworth appended to this sonnet the following note, which is given entire, to show the strength of his opinion on this subject:

"In this age a word can not be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, 'that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period.' A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers: 'Ever since I came in place, I have labored nothing more than that the external public worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which, while we live in the body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigor.'"

wanderers, we have not bad men, defiled by crime; but there is, speaking through them all, the high, pure mind of Wordsworth. He simply exhibited his own humanity, which he felt and knew to be in them also. This is an ideal truth, and not a truth of fact; and the idea is not what they were, but what they ought to be, and what they yet should be.

Let us, again, on the other hand, come to the question of Wordsworth's change into High-Churchism and Toryism. And first, by-the-way, I would remark that there is another side of the truth Wordsworth put forward, which you will find in a poem familiar to most of you, in which Canning has given us the history of the "Needy Knife-Grinder." A republican, in all the warmth of republican spirit, with his lips full of liberty, fraternity, and equality, sees approaching a man in rags—a poor wretched-looking being; and he instantly imagines that here is some victim to the oppression of the Poor Laws, the Game Laws, or of Tithes, or Taxation; but it turns out, upon inquiry, that he has before him a man of bad life, of indolent and intemperate habits, who, in a fit of intoxication, has got into the wretched state in which he beholds him; and the indignation and confusion of our good republican are completed when the needy knife-grinder entreats that he would give him some small coin, in order that he might become drunk again. This is the other side of truth—the truth of fact—a low, and base, and vulgar truth. And, after all, when we come to examine these, which is the higher truth?—is it higher to state things as they really are, or to state them as they ought to be?—to say that the lower classes are degraded, and evil, and base; or to say that there yet slumbers in them the aristocratic and the godlike, and that *that*, by the grace of God, shall one day be drawn forth? In early life, then, in all his most democratic feelings, Wordsworth was an aristocrat at heart.

And now we come to the other side of the question. And first, in reference to the term "High-Churchism," I do not use it in an offensive sense. If there are any persons here holding High-Church views, I implore them to believe that, although I am not a High-Churchman myself—far from it—I can yet sympathize with them in all their manliness and high-mindedness, and recognize much in them that is pure and aspiring. If, therefore, I now give my own definition of High-Churchism, let them not be offended. There are, then, two things opposite to each other; the one is Pantheism, the other is High-Churchism. Pantheism is a tendency to see the godlike everywhere, the personal God nowhere. The other is the tendency to localize the personal Deity in certain places, certain times, and certain acts—certain places called consecrated churches; certain times called fast-days, and so forth; certain acts, called acts of ecclesiastical life, in certain persons, called consecrated priests. These two things, you will observe, are opposed to each other—diametrically opposed. Now it is a strange and remarkable fact that Wordsworth has been charged with both these things; by some he has been charged with Pantheism, and by others with what we call High-Churchism. In reference to Pantheism, in order that those who are not familiar with the word may understand it, I will quote one or two passages from Wordsworth. The first, which occurs in the sonnets, I have read. In that it will be seen that Wordsworth speaks of the force of Nature as if that were the only living soul of the world. I will take another passage which occurs in the well-known lines on "Revisiting Tintern Abbey:"

And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean, and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things.

In these words, grand and magnificent as they are, we have the very germ of Pantheism. But now, in looking at one of these classes of passages, we must ever remember to modify it by the other. When Wordsworth spoke as a High-Churchman, we must remember that he was the very same man who spoke of the Living Being that created the universe as "a motion and a spirit that impels all thinking things;" and when, on the other hand, I use language which seems to pass almost into Pantheism, we must remember that he was the same man who wrote the ecclesiastical sonnets, and who spoke of a personal and localized Deity.

And what if it be true—and true it is—that the earlier part of Wordsworth's life was characterized by the predominancy of one of these feelings, and the later part by the other—is there any thing there that is unnatural or inconsistent? Is it unnatural if the mind of a man progresses from the vague transcendental down towards the personal? Is there any thing inconsistent in the great truth, that the mind of man, after having wandered in the outer confines of the circumference of this universe, should at last seek its home and find its blessedness in the rest of a personal centre? Now, with respect to the other point, namely, Wordsworth's Toryism, or Conservatism—call it what you will; it does not matter whether I am now addressing Tories or Radicals; since we are speaking of great principles we will have done with names. I will read you a passage in which Wordsworth speaks of England:

Hail to the crown by freedom shaped—to gird  
An English sovereign's brow! and to the throne  
Whereon he sits. Whose deep foundations lie  
In veneration and the people's love;  
Whose steps are equity, whose seal is law.

Now the veriest democrat can only object to this as a matter of fact, and will probably say, "If this be England, I would desire to preserve her as she is; but because I do not believe it, I desire to alter her; in heart and in idea we are one, the only point on which we differ is the point of historical fact." I say, therefore, that in Wordsworth's most democratic days he was aristocratic in heart; and in his most aristocratic days he had all that was most generous, and all that was most aspiring in the democratic mind. I now come rapidly towards the conclusion; but having said what I have, it is necessary that I should complete the picture by giving you an idea of the patriotism in Wordsworth—that intense and deep love for England, in which aristocrat and democrat are blended in the formation of one high-minded man. I will read a passage showing Wordsworth's love for his country:

When I have borne in memory what has tamed  
Great nations, how ennobling thoughts depart  
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert  
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed  
I had, my country!—am I to be blamed,  
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,  
Verily in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;  
And I by my affection was beguiled:  
What wonder if a poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child?

I must preface the next sonnet I have to read, by reminding you that it was written at a period when a French invasion was expected. It is a very hard and difficult thing for us in the present day, broken as we are into so many factions, to conceive the united enthusiasm which stirred the heart of England in those days, when every moment the invasion of the great conqueror of Europe was possible. The fleets of England swept the seas; on

every hill the signal beacons blazed; 420,000 men were in arms; the service of the church was liable to be interrupted by the clang of arms upon the pavement; every village church-yard was converted into a parade-ground; every boy felt as if there were strength, even in his puny arm, to strike a blow in defense of the cause of his country; every man, excepting when he thought of the women of his country, was longing for the time to come when it should be seen with what a strength, with what a majesty a soldier fought, when he was fighting in the magnificent and awful cause of his altar and his hearth.

The moment was like that of the deep silence which precedes a thunder-storm, when every breath is hushed, and every separate dried leaf, as it falls through the boughs, is heard tinkling, tinkling down through the branches, from branch to branch; when men's breath was held; when men's blood beat thick in their hearts, as if they were waiting in solemn and grand, but not in painful—rather in triumphant—expectation for the moment when the storm should break, and the French cry of "Glory" should be thundered back again by England's sublimer battle-cry of "Duty!" It was at this time that Wordsworth's sonnet appeared:

It is not to be thought of that the flood  
Of British freedom, which to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, with "pomp of waters unwithstood,"  
Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands  
Should perish! and to evil and to good  
Be lost forever. In our halls is hung  
Armory of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue  
That Shakspeare spake; the faith and morals hold  
Which Milton held. In every thing we are sprung  
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

In the next passage I have to bring before you, I will remind you of some other facts. The sonnet is addressed to the men of Kent. Now, there is a difference between the Kentish men and the men of Kent. The Kentish men are simply the inhabitants of the county of Kent. The "men of Kent" is a technical expression applied to the inhabitants of that part of Kent who were never subdued in the Norman invasion, and who obtained glorious terms for themselves, on capitulation, receiving the confirmation of their own charters; so that until very recently—if not at present—they were still in possession of the custom called Gavelkind, by which the sons inherited, not unequally, the eldest taking precedence, but they all taking share and share alike. It was to the "men of Kent," the inhabitants of that part of the county nearest to the neighboring land of France, that Wordsworth addressed this sonnet:

Vanguard of Liberty, ye men of Kent,  
Ye children of a soil that doth advance  
Her haughty brow against the coast of France,  
Now is the time to prove your hardiment!  
To France be words of invitation sent!  
They from their fields can see the countenance  
Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,  
And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.  
Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,  
Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath;  
Confirmed the charters that were yours before;  
No parleying now! In Britain is one breath,  
We all are with you now from shore to shore:  
Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death!

In this age of cosmopolitanism, when we are, forsooth, too much philanthropists to be patriots; when any deep and strong emotion of love to our



country is reckoned as nothing more than the sacredness of the school-boy's affection; when our young people who have travelled can find no words more capable of expressing their contempt than these—"It is so English;" it does the heart good to read these firm and pure, and true and manly words, issuing from the lips of one who was not ashamed to love his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength; a man whose every word, and every thought, and every act, were the words, and thoughts, and acts of a manly, true-spirited, high-minded Englishman!

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## NOTES OF A LECTURE

*Delivered at Hurtsper-point, in 1851, to the Members of a Working-men's Reading-room.*

I AM here to-night through the invitation of your kind friends, with no right but that of unfeigned interest in every institution like yours.

The subject I had proposed was the Progress of Society. I changed it for that of the Working-classes. But even this is too full of pretension.

Nevertheless, the mere fact of my standing here to-night is full of significance.

More so than railways or electric telegraphs.

That so many of the working-classes should come here after a hard day's work is very significant.

It proves the growing victory of the spirit over the animal: that the lower life of toil and animal indulgence is getting to be reckoned as not the *all* of man.

It shows, too, that the working-classes are becoming conscious of their own destinies.

Any society is in an advanced state when it begins to contemplate itself, and asks, "Whither do we tend?"

Three thousand years ago, the centre of the world's civilization was in Eastern Africa.

The monuments of this civilization still remain. The pyramids.—They are the wonder of travellers, whose report of their measurements excites, in turn, our astonishment and surprise.

But to one considering the progress of the race, these pyramids tell a different tale. They were built by the working-classes, under coercion. They were built for royal ostentation.

Herodotus speaks of hundreds of thousands degraded into serfs.

In the metropolis of the world's present civilization, a structure stood this year almost as marvellous as these pyramids.

Remarkable not for gigantic massiveness.—But for punctuality and order.

Built, too, under royal auspices, and built by the laboring-classes.

But not built, like the pyramids, for royal splendor. It was built for the exhibition of the works of laboring-men.

You could not go through that building without feeling that royalty itself was second there, not first.

One feeling I had was—There is nothing here that I can make. I belong to the non-producing classes.

New era.—The dignity of Labor.—The sinking of the Individual in the Society.

Another truth typified by that bearing on the destinies of the working-classes. The approach of an age of peace.—Falaïse.—Guizot.

Assume, then, the fact of the growing importance of the working-classes.

There are two ways of treating this fact, just as there are two ways of treating an heir just entering on a noble patrimony. One is, that of the sycophant, to tell him how great he is.

Another way is, that of wise friends, who tell him that as he has become great, therefore he has duties; because he has become rich, therefore he has responsibilities.

There are two ways of treating the working-classes. One, to tell them how enlightened they are.—How powerful.—That *Vox populi vox Dei*, etc.

Another, that of reminding them that because free, they should fit themselves for freedom; because destined to play a great part on the stage of the world's history, therefore it behooves them to cast off their ignorance—their vices.

Value of these institutions. First, habits of self-government. Secondly, they expand the sympathies.

I hold it as a principle that a man is great and good in proportion to the extent of his sympathies.—The man whose eye is ever fixed on himself is the smallest of human beings.—The next step is love of relations.—The next, love of country.—The next, sympathy with all that belongs to man.

And this is God's method of gradual education, through the family, the nation, the race.

One means given for this is public newspapers, which tell of other countries.—A wise man gets out of the paltry events of his own village—election of church-wardens, etc.—to think of great questions.—Further still, the social state of other countries.

Observe on our English narrowness, the idea that one Englishman is equal to two Frenchmen.—We are apt to think that English manners, English literature, etc., is the only good thing in God's world.

Recent case of an illustrious foreigner, formerly Dictator of Hungary. Received with enthusiasm by the working-classes. I pronounce no opinion in this place about him. Some say great, good, noble, others call him a charlatan and revolutionist. This matters not. The question is not so much *what* a man worships, admires, but *as what*. Kossuth may be no hero, if you will; but to see those hard-handed sons of toil in Manchester and Birmingham honoring one whom they thought good and noble, when in exile and oppressed; he has little heart indeed who is not touched by it.

Now this kind of institution fits men for work.—Foolish objection that it incapacitates them for business.—The laborer who knows something of chemistry—on what principle soils are composed; why such manures are employed in one case and not in another; according to what laws decomposition takes place—is a better laborer than one who knows nothing of all this.

The mechanic who understands the laws of motion, is a better mechanic than the Chinese sort, who can merely follow a copy.

The domestic servant is improved when she understands the reason why certain things are done, and why certain results follow.

There is a foolish prejudice against educating the poor, lest we should fail to get servants or apprentices.

Putting aside the diabolical character of the objection, think of the sacrifice of a human being, that your work may be done or your food made!

Progress means—1. Not to be free from work; envy of ladies and gentlemen false and foolish, if by that is meant persons who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves.—Laws of Humanity.—Greatness.—Goodness.—Only through toil is muscular strength and health gained. Mental force is got by struggle with difficulty.

2. Not the obliteration of differences in rank.

There can be no doubt that the growth in importance of the laboring-classes will alter ranks, making them less exclusive, less bitter to others—will raise some who are now degraded, etc.

But it betrays an ignorance of human nature to suppose that ranks will ever be obliterated. Superior tastes, capacities, etc., will unite some into a class, and distinguish them from others.

Gradation of ranks bring out various manifestations of our Humanity.—Gratitude.—Aspiration.—Dignity.—Respect.

3. Not the obliteration of difference in condition.

Of the many errors entertained by those who have advocated the cause of the working-man, there are few to be more regretted than the exaggerated importance attached to inequality of condition.

Inequality of condition, so far as it stints the faculties, or cuts off from opportunities of information, it is well to desire should be removed, but in itself it is a trifle. And all this foolish exaggeration fixes the attention on what is external in the condition, as if the equality to be arrived at were the superficial external equality. It is not this that makes real inequality. False vulgar thoughts, that because you can not keep a horse or drive a carriage, therefore you have not your rights.

4. But progress means increased opportunities of developing the heart, the conscience, and the intellect. It is not each man's born right to be as rich as his neighbor, or to possess the soil.

But it is his inalienable right to be permitted to develop all the powers that God gave.

If the laborer live so that the death of a child is welcomed by the thought that there is one mouth the less to feed, he can not develop his heart affections.

If he lives in a cottage where brothers and sisters sleep in one room, he can not develop his conscience.

If he comes home overworn, so that he has no time to read, then he can not develop his intellect.

Clearly, therefore, define such a social position for the laboring man as shall give him scope enough to be in every sense of the word a MAN. A man whose respect is not servility; whose religion is not superstition; and whose obedience is not the drudgery of dumb driven cattle.

Until that time come, the working-classes are not free.

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## A SPEECH

*Delivered at the Town Hall, Brighton, April 24, 1849, at a Meeting of the Inhabitants, called by the Early-closing Association, presided over by the Bishop of Chichester.*

THE Resolution which has been put into my hands is—"That this meeting, believing that an earlier and more uniform hour of suspension of business would give time to all engaged therein for moral and intellectual improvement, would recommend to all tradesmen the hour of eight o'clock as the hour of closing throughout the year; and pledges itself to make purchases before eight o'clock in the evenings, and to request their servants to do the same."

There is a vast difference between that which is theoretically desirable and that which is practically possible. Our enthusiasm is frequently corrected by

experience. It throws too wild, too sanguine, a hope on the future. But difficulties arise; and that which at first seemed easy, turns out to be at last an impossibility. It is in almost every undertaking as it is in life. The lesson we have to learn in life is the same lesson which we have to learn in travelling through a mountainous country. The first lesson is, to estimate distances. The traveller sees the mountain summit sparkling in the evening sun, apparently close above his head; and he resolves that the next morning he will ascend that mountain, and come down again before breakfast. But he finds next day a long three miles between himself and the mountain foot; and that when he has arrived there it takes five or six hours to ascend, and half that time to come back again; and it is well if he returns before night-fall. It is precisely the same with every human undertaking. Our first idea is very different from that which attainment teaches us. We set out with brilliant expectations; we find them very slow in realizing themselves. And so life assumes, by degrees, a soberer and a sadder hue. We find that between our ideal and its attainment there is an immense interval. That which seemed to be the work of days we find to be the work of months; that which seemed to be the work of years turns out to be the work of centuries. And so, step by step, man is disenchanting—led on by hopes of a bright future which is never realized *here*. I believe that the lesson of all experience and of all life is this: to expect very little, for there is but little of human expectation to be attained; to sow abundantly, and to be satisfied with a very small harvest. Happy is the man not thoroughly broken by disappointment! Happy is that man! for the object of this training is, not to discourage him, but that he may work more calmly, with less of fitful enthusiasm—with steady gaze fixed on the Hereafter! I make these observations, because they are peculiarly applicable to the subject in hand. This subject of early closing has been taken up by many people very warmly at first, who have cooled down, and have afterwards let it drop. Two or three years ago there was a large meeting in this town for the same purpose as this one. Some of those who were then enthusiastic and earnest have by degrees become lukewarm and despondent. Their expectations have not been realized; much that was hoped for has not been attained; there have been many difficulties which were not anticipated. And so the result has been, that they have fallen back into coldness and indifference. It is for this reason that I think the tone we should adopt this evening should be calm and sober.

It is exceedingly easy to paint this subject in most glowing colors. It is the easiest thing in the world to represent the young men as craving for intellectual knowledge, as suffering under physical difficulties, as eager for and requiring moral improvement. It is exceedingly easy to do all this, because there is a great deal of truth in it. It is exceedingly easy, moreover, because it is popular. But I am not here to say that which is popular, but that which is true. I am not here to say that which shall win a cheer, but to say that which shall be practical and useful. We are met here to-night for two purposes. To resolve that "an earlier and more uniform hour of suspension of business would give time to all engaged therein for moral and intellectual improvement;" and that the meeting "recommend to all tradesmen the hour of eight o'clock as the hour of closing throughout the year, and pledges itself to make purchases accordingly." The subject is complicated with difficulties; and although it would be exceedingly easy to speak in denunciation of those opposed to this movement of early closing, I feel there is something to be said on both sides of the question; and therefore I ask the meeting to listen to me dispassionately.

In considering this question, we discern three things: the desirable, the difficult, the possible.

With regard to the desirable, I believe it will be generally admitted that it

is desirable for business to be carried on within fewer hours. There is a great difference between the way in which this question is to be looked at, as a manufacturing and as a trading question. The question touching hours in the factory does not hold good as to the shop. The object of the factory is to produce; and it may be argued that the work done in twelve hours can not be done in ten. It is not true that this argument can hold with respect to trade. In trade the object is, not to produce materials, but to serve customers; and if you take the shops in which most work is done, there is not one in which there can not be found five minutes, ten minutes, half-hours, hours, in which all employed are not waiting for customers. Let those five minutes and half-hours be added up, and they will more than cover the time taken in serving after any given hour, say seven or eight o'clock. If those customers had come in before nine or ten, there is not one in this meeting who will not acknowledge there were people and time enough to serve them. Then all of us will agree in the possibility that the work may be done in less time. That, if it can be done in less time, it should be done, I think will also be agreed; and the resolution furnishes us with the reasons—"that an earlier and more uniform hour of suspension of business would give time to all engaged therein for moral and intellectual improvement."

Into the physical necessity for this early closing I shall not enter. It is a medical question, and I believe that members of the medical profession, who will address you, will touch on this with more effect than I could do. I ask no further proof of the physical necessity which exists, than to see the working-man and the assistant in the shop in their Sunday walk. There is in their gait a languor and an effeminacy which should not belong to Englishmen. In the second place, this matter is necessary for the sake of intellectual improvement. This age has been often called the age of the aristocracy of wealth. The aristocracy of birth is now much passed by. We are living in an age in which gold is worshipped. In former ages, "virtue" was "valor." In Italy, in the present day, the word "vertu," applied to a man, means "taste in amassing curiosities." In England we speak of the worth of a man as proportioned by the amount of gold which he has been enabled to gather round him as a kind of accretion. And, therefore, it is a matter of rejoicing for me to see a meeting which protests against a principle such as this. This meeting proclaims, in the face of the day, that there is something more sublime in man than the worship of gold. It maintains that there is in the nature of man, that which requires and demands intellectual and moral improvement.

Now, with regard to the intellectual improvement, I shall not press it too much. It is perfectly possible that it may be exaggerated. I will not say that all these young men are craving intellectual knowledge. The young men in the trading classes are like the young men in the upper classes; and I suppose that if one out of twenty in either class is earnestly desirous of this intellectual knowledge, it is a large average. I will grant there is not a difficulty in the way of obtaining this knowledge that may not be surmounted. Men borne down by defects of position and education have achieved for themselves intellectual emancipation. Ferguson, Watt, and Franklin are noble examples of this. There are men who seem to be born intellectual heroes; men born to cut their way through any obstacles, men who only require to meet difficulties in their way, and those difficulties will be surmounted. They are like the trees on the mountain, that require no more than a bare covering of soil on the rock to strike their roots firmly down; nothing more than the clear, serene, thin air of heaven to throw abroad their branches in. These are intellectual giants; and they would acquire knowledge under any circumstances; it is impossible to crush them. But it is not for men like these that I have to plead. The mass of men are not the intellectual gi-

ants ; they are rather the humble and the feeble ; the exotic, that requires care and culture. They require to be fostered, to be placed on the sunny side of the hill. Give them opportunities, give them time ; and then it will be found, not that they will attain grand intellectual dimensions, but they will achieve something like intellectual respectability. And I desire to mention one circumstance, which seems to be a strong corroboration of this fact. Some time ago, the drapers of this town resolved on closing at an earlier hour ; and about the same time the Brighton Athenæum was established, in order that the young men might have an opportunity of intellectual cultivation ; many young men availed themselves of those opportunities. From causes into which I will not now enter, the rule of early closing was obliged to be infringed. Ask you the result ? At this time the Athenæum contained something like six hundred or seven hundred members. There are about two hundred assistants, I am told, engaged in the Drapery trade in this town ; and of these, sixty were members of the Athenæum ; all but ten withdrew. I will not press too much on this ; I know in some cases there were rooms provided by employers, and libraries furnished, and that these withdrew them from the Athenæum ; but I hold the case indisputably to be this, that if there be a time allowed for cultivation of the mind, there is on the part of the young men a real wish to avail themselves of it.

In the next place, this resolution maintains that early closing is necessary for "moral improvement." Early closing is necessary for leisure. Man was not made to divide his time between study and work. Besides that, there must be recreation. He who made the eye, spread around us this world of beauty, and caused the contemplation of it to be accompanied by the feeling of intense enjoyment ; He who threw into the heart the power of domestic affection, gave it delight in domestic sympathy ; He who led his disciples into the desert to "rest a while," made man for recreation. And, therefore, I am prepared to take it on the lowest ground. The young men require, not merely mental instruction, but time for pleasure, for social enjoyment, for recreation. It is partly for this purpose the Sabbath is necessary for man. It is necessary, in the first place, to nurse the Human ; and, in the second, to nurse the Divine within him. In the first, to give to man recreation, and in that he shares with the lowest animals ; in the second, the cultivation which should nurse the Divine within him. You have, in the first, necessity for rest ; in the second, necessity for worship. It is the result of the late closing to make the Sabbath-day simply and solely a day of rest, and not of holiness. It may be well to speak of the desecration of the Sabbath-day. To say the trains shall not run on Sundays ; to say the citizens of London shall not leave their homes, nor the artisan go out of Brighton into the country ; it is easy to say this. But we have no right to say that if a man has not time for rest in the week, he shall not take it on the Sabbath.

Once more : This early closing is wanted for moral improvement. For the sake of "work," I draw a distinction between it and "occupation." "Occupation" is not "work." The object, the intention, of occupation is a blessed one. It saves the mind from corrupting and wearing out itself. The man who has nothing to do is a most wretched character. He rises in the morning, with fifteen hours before him, in which he makes society wretched and himself wretched also. There is something else implied in "work." "Work" is productive. It produces something ; it gives to a man's character self-dependence and inward strength. Boswell, with his singular simplicity, tells us of an occasion in which he was overtaken by a storm ; and he relates that he went about asking question after question of the sailors, interrupting every man in his duty, till at last a sailor put a rope in his hand, and said, "We are in danger, and the safety of the vessel depends on this being held with great force." Occupied in this way, he forgot his fears ; and the

storm passed over. He had all the while been pulling a useless rope. His was "occupation;" the sailor's "work" was productive. The artisan is a man engaged in work; he is a man who either cultivates the soil and produces food for man to live upon; or he takes the raw material, and makes furniture and all things necessary for life. The shop-keeper has not "work," but "occupation;" for no man will tell us that the men engaged all day long in folding and unfolding ribbons, showing them in proper lights, and putting them across the counter—no one will tell us he has been engaged in "work;" he has in "occupation." It has saved himself and society from the wretchedness cast upon idleness. Therefore we claim these hours, that young men may exchange "occupation" for "work." Young men! For what purpose do you ask early hours? Is it for leisure only? is it to escape from occupation? If that be all, Brighton is being stirred for a very small cause; whereas the young men who came to me as a deputation, spoke of something far higher. They asked for time; not to give it to leisure only, not to give it to social enjoyment only, but to work, to discipline their minds, to do the great duty God has given them to do on earth, that their soul, and body, and spirit might be presented perfect before their Maker.

And now I come to the second part of what I have to say. Having spoken of the "desirable," I pass on to the "difficult." And the first difficulty arises from the peculiar circumstance of Brighton. Brighton is not a manufacturing town, neither is it a commercial town. Brighton is a place of enjoyment for strangers. Something like one-third or one-fourth will be found not to be residents, but extraneous of the population. Every Saturday, London pours out thousands to take advantage of the sea-air. Let any man go to the railway station, and he will be astonished to see the mass of human beings flocking into the town. What is the result? Numbers come down by the last train. They go to the hotels and lodging-houses, and there are articles of consumption wanted. They send out—they must send out—for their provisions; and then, if a tradesman refuses to sell, one difficulty is, that he may have lost a customer for life. There is another difficulty. They go through the place, through the principal streets of the town; and then every tradesman knows that during the last two hours of the day, sauntering about there, there are numbers of people who will be induced to go into the shops and purchase the goods which are seen in the brilliantly-lighted windows; and it requires a strong amount of principle for the master-tradesman to say he will sacrifice a profit, which, if he does, he will never have in any other way.

Again: The town is the resort of the wealthy—of the aristocracy. There is a difference between this town and manufacturing towns on that account. I have inquired, and I find that, in Sheffield, and Birmingham, and Liverpool, and most places of that kind, the early closing is easily carried out, and carried out at even earlier hours than seven; for in manufacturing towns life is of a different description. There all men play into each other's hands—all understand each other's necessities. But at Brighton and Cheltenham there is a peculiar difficulty; and the difficulty arises partly from this—that the inhabitants are the wealthy. Here, much is different; few understand one another; and when we come to inquire, we find that it is not the purchases of the rich themselves that form the great staple in the occupation of these late hours, but it is the servants of the rich classes. And here I would say a word to mistresses on a subject of which they can necessarily know nothing. I made it my business to make inquiries of the police, and the information given to me by them was of the most appalling character, because it told a sad tale of the result of that which is done in perfect ignorance. When the female servant is sent out at night, the mistress knows not the consequences, nor the sin and misery which often comes from female servants going out at late hours to purchase. I do not say this in a spirit

of indignation against those mistresses and employers. It is simply ignorance on their part, not hard-heartedness. But it is a thing to impress upon ourselves and others, that there is

An evil wrought by want of thought,  
As well as want of heart.

I pass on to another difficulty; and that arises from the deterioration of the character of the young men themselves. Those who are present now are not the master-tradesmen, or I would take a different course. Those present now are most anxious that the masters should concede this boon of early closing; and therefore I will say, not that which may be popular, but that which may be calculated to do good. In the first place, there is a feeling widely existing, that the use made of this privilege is not what it ought to have been. All the returns of your libraries show how few works of information are read—how many of fiction. More than that, the police tell us that the cigar-shop reaps a terrible harvest out of the wages of the young men; that the billiard-table is at work; that the public-houses, and houses worse than they, are full. I therefore press this matter urgently on the young men. Better far that the hours of business should even be extended, than that extra hours should be gained for licentiousness (so falsely called pleasure), or for mere idleness, which is the grave of a living man. Better, far! for your whole being, physical, moral, and intellectual. Beware, too, of eye-service, for I have it from the master of some of the men, that he has lost confidence in them in respect of their attention to business when not overlooked. The way in which your leaders have acted, and the sentiments they have expressed on this subject, do them great honor. And if the young men used the privilege of early closing on the principle set forth by their leaders, the last difficulty will vanish away.

There is, however, a difficulty in this respect, that it is hardly possible to legislate in an artificial manner. We desire that the shops should be closed at eight. This law, like other laws, will be of advantage, if it be in accordance with the feeling produced already in society; but, if it be superimposed on society, it must fail. Every thing of legislation coercive, and not expressive of the mind and desire of society, must fail. When England tried to force her Episcopacy on Scotland, the result was, that the Episcopacy was thrown off, never probably to be placed in power there again. When England tried to force Protestantism on Ireland, compulsorily, the result was, that Roman Catholicism became the religion of the land. So with private individuals. The law can never be compulsorily enforced. We must proceed from that which is within to that which is without; and not from that which is without to that which is within. A man of disorderly habits tries to regulate himself by an outward rule; and he sits down and maps out his time and proposes a plan of action, and he has it on his paper beautifully arranged, the books he will read and the acts he will do. Go to him in three months, and ask him the result. It is not reality. It is law, not spirit; therefore the thing has failed. Therefore do I protest most earnestly against any attempt to carry this early-closing movement by coercion. I protest against any thing like dictation to the master-tradesmen. I protest against any thing like an attempt at compulsion. It was said to me a few days ago that this was a conspiracy against the masters. We repel that, in the name of the young men; we protest against it; we protest against every thing by which the masters may be held up to ridicule; and, with just as much indignation as I should protest against carrying the point by breaking windows in the street, I protest against any attempt to carry out the principle of exclusive dealing. I hold in my hands the report of a recent meeting in favor of exclusive dealing. It was with much regret that I read it.



I protest most strongly against this principle. In the first place, because it makes that prominent which ought to be subordinate. It is quite sufficient ground for dealing with a tradesman, that he is moral, that his wares are good; but when we take a ground such as this, that though he be a moral and good man, and sells goods better than his neighbors, because he does not choose to do what we do, we will not deal with him, we make that prominent which ought to be subordinate. Again, I protest against it because it is illiberal. There are men who hold—I believe mistakenly—that such a measure as this of early closing would be injurious to the young men and to society. We believe they are wrong, but it is their opinion; and I ask on what possible ground men can come forward and demand of us that we should deal exclusively, because a man does not hold our views on the subject, and then complain of us if we deal exclusively with those who hold our own political, or our own ecclesiastical views?

And now, to pass briefly to the remainder of what I have to say. All at present shows a difficulty; but nothing which is impracticable. Let it be clearly understood that in all those difficulties there is not one that *ought* to stand in the way of early closing; and I have a pleasure in proposing this resolution, because the language it uses is the language, not of coercion, nor of dictation, but of recommendation. It pledges us to recommend to all tradesmen the adoption of eight o'clock as the hour of closing. There are master-tradesmen who do their duty by their assistants. There are some who look on their young men as objects committed by God to their charge, and desire to treat them as their children. And there are master-tradesmen, who open for their young men rooms, and have lectures, and all kinds of instruction. Let us have but a hundred such masters, and the whole question of early closing is safe.

It is possible and practicable to force this question on the attention of the community. We pledge ourselves in this resolution to do all we can to promote so desirable an object, by making all purchases before the evening, and requesting the heads of establishments to do the same. Let us not pledge ourselves in a moment of enthusiasm. When the blood burns, we know how prodigally the tongue vows. It is easy in enthusiastic moments to make a pledge; but let us pledge ourselves to endeavor to understand the immense importance of this subject, and to act out our convictions fully and completely. Let us understand that there are higher aims than merely obtaining early closing. What we want is, not to get a stringent law to carry out our own principles, but to promote a pervading spirit of good feeling through all classes; in one word, to feel that "we are members one of another."

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## A SPEECH

*Delivered at a Meeting of the Brighton District Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes, held at the Pavilion, Brighton, November 25, 1852.*

THE REV. F. W. ROBERTSON moved, "That this meeting hears with satisfaction the success which has attended the establishment of the Brighton Branch of the Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes, and is of opinion that the extension of the undertaking will be the means of conferring more extensively essential benefit on the social and moral condition of the working-classes of the town of Brighton; and

that such extension will be more effectually promoted by obtaining an increase in the number of shares, which it pledges itself to use its best exertions to effect."

It is to one sentence alone of this resolution that I shall direct a few observations: that in which we say that "this will be the means of conferring more extensively essential benefit on the social and moral condition of the working-classes of the town of Brighton." The great object for which institutions such as this are established, is to procure for the working-classes a "*home*." To explain the meaning of this word is unnecessary; before an English audience it is superfluous. There is not one present to-day who has not been, even from childhood, familiar with all those sacred associations which God has thrown in such profusion around the precincts of home; but to the great majority of the poor in this country there is no such thing as home. We dare not, can not say, that those two small rooms in which a whole family are huddled up together—those two rooms which serve for kitchen, sleeping-room, parlor, and for every thing; in which there are no conveniences and no comforts, and in which, when a man or a child may be dying, he would be disturbed by the necessary noise and bustle of the family,—we dare not, except in mockery, call that, in a Christian land, a "*home*."

Yet we too often ignore this condition of the poor man's dwelling, and hence arise many practical fallacies. I will mention but one: the mistake with respect to the possibility of the poor man spending the Lord's day as he should. This subject has occupied much attention in this country. There has been a project recently set on foot by a large number of philanthropists, and a large number of speculators, in different parts of the country, to establish edifices or buildings in which the poor shall have recreation, pleasure, and instruction; and some of these, one especially, the importance of which overrides all the others, it has been proposed to open on the Lord's day, and that too with the sanction of the Government. This has been met by a very large proportion of the religious inhabitants of this country with great dismay and indignation. It has appeared to them that this is a desecration of the Lord's day, a breaking of the covenant between God and his people. They have drawn most touching pictures of the poor man spending his Sabbath evenings surrounded by his family, and with the Bible open before him. I am not about to pronounce any opinion with respect to the view entertained among religious people on this subject. There are two views entertained on this question, and both these ought, in all Christian consistency, to be allowed to those who hold them. Some believe that the Sabbath, the Jewish Sabbath, if not in its integrity and strictness, at all events with a certain degree of modified strictness, accordant with the superior genius of Christianity, should be observed. Some, on the other hand, believe that the Jewish Sabbath is altogether abrogated; that the Lord's day is not the same thing; that it did not arise out of it, nor was it a transfer of one day to another, but that what has succeeded the Jewish Sabbath is not what we call the Lord's day; that it is not one day alone that the Christian is to observe, but a grander, larger, more spiritual day, the day of the whole life, the sanctification of the whole life of man, to be yielded to God, as purchased by Christ. With respect to the truth of these two conflicting opinions, we have nothing, at present, to do. All we have to consider is, how far we can with any consistency agree upon this point. We are all agreed on this, that the most blessed institution which has descended to us from our forefathers is the Christian Lord's day. All, I believe, are agreed in this: that it is deeply rooted as an institution in the necessities of our human nature; and that to give up the Lord's day merely to the physical or intellectual needs of man will be utterly insufficient, and that the higher and truer half of man, that which makes him a spiritual creature, being uncared for, the Sabbath will be but a very imper-

fect day of rest. We are all agreed, also, in an earnest resolve to set our faces against those views, now so common, which identify the Christianizing of the population with the humanizing of the population. We believe that to humanize is one thing; that to Christianize is another thing. We believe that pictures, statues, music, æsthetics, tropical plants, and all the other contents and adjuncts of these places, valuable as they are in humanizing, are utterly insufficient to produce the Christianity of the Cross. We are all agreed in believing that there is a distinction between æsthetics and religious worship, between the worship of the beautiful and the worship of holiness. We are, therefore, all agreed in an earnest desire that, among all classes of the country, there should be a more religious, pure, and holy observance of the Lord's day. But now, let me ask the question, With what consistency can we demand of the poor man that he shall have no recreation of an out-doors kind, if we have done nothing to provide for him a *home* within-doors, wherein to spend the Christian Sabbath?

It was only yesterday that I conversed with an intelligent working-man in this town, and the man expressed in very striking language the bitter indignation which was felt by his class towards those who were, as he said, in a bigoted way endeavoring to rob them of their Sabbath. I trust that I convinced him, I tried at all events with all my heart to convince him, that it was not bigotry in those who tried to take from the working-men their Sabbath: but I am not sure that I convinced the man that there was not great ignorance on the part of those persons with regard to the necessities of the poor. It seems, therefore, that the only true and proper answer we can make to the poor man, when he expresses indignation at being robbed of his out-door Sabbath, is by an institution such as this, which would give him a home wherein to spend an in-door Sabbath. Every institution of this kind seems to tell of a new era in the human race and of the progress of civilization. What is the true characteristic of the present age? It is a disposition to acknowledge the importance and the value of that which appears to be small and insignificant. When Mr. Wordsworth announced this as the great truth and the great principle of all the poetry of life, he was met with a universal shout of laughter; but the spirit of the remark has since permeated all society, and all our literature. It is the characteristic of the age—it is the characteristic of its literature. The most popular and the most vigorous of the writers of this day arose first to eminence by drawing the attention of the country to the modes of thinking, the feeling, the living, and even the slang of the lower classes; and that book which has occupied, and is still occupying the attention both of Europe and America\*—to what is owing its singular power, but to the thrilling interest it has thrown around the thought, that in the negro himself there is a common humanity with our own—in the lowest of the species something that agrees even with the highest! It must be an era marking a changed state of things, when princes and nobles, instead of occupying their time with battles and tournaments, are occupied with subjects such as improving the dwellings of the poor, and the construction of baths and wash-houses. This, I think, must prove that we have arrived at a state of things in which the smallest, the minutest atoms of the species become of importance; when members of the Government are absolutely not ashamed to give lectures, and to enlighten the people on the necessity of drainage and sanitary regulations—surely this is significant. And in all this we have, I think, the very genius and spirit of Christianity; we have that which, eighteen hundred years ago, was declared when an apostle told us, "Nay, more, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary; and those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor."

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\* "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

In that book, to which I have already adverted, there is an incident related which struck me as it were with a flush of surprise, because it brought a well-known and little thought-of passage of Scripture under notice with new associations. It is that in which two adults are represented as gazing on the play of two young children. One of the children was a female slave; the other the daughter of the lady of the mansion. Of the adults, one was a man whose feelings, as is but too commonly the case, were far beyond his attainments, his aspirations beyond his will. He had consequently sunk down into that state of mere sentimentalism, which is inseparably connected with thinking well and not doing well, and he is represented as contented with, from time to time, an indignant and sarcastic expression on the inconsistency of those around him. The other was a lady whose whole life had been spent in the acquisition of maxims, but who had not been able to live deeply in the spirit of those maxims. These children were at play, and one was seen to throw her arms around the other; and that other, who had evaded all attempts to soften or to tame, was melted by the tenderness of her white sister; and an expression burst from the lips of the lady to the effect that *now* she understood the deep meaning and spirit there was in the passage of Scripture, "He laid his hands upon them, and healed them." She had up to this time been uttering maxims with regard to the equality of the human race; but she had not "*laid her hands*" upon the negroes. I do not say but that this is fanciful; yet it strikes at the deep root of it all, for the great difference between His love of the human race and ours, the great difference in the way He stated the brotherhood of the race is this, that His was real, and true, and deep, and full of kindly sympathy. It was not standing apart from them; but mixing with them, and being one with them; and therefore it is, that what we are *now* to do is, to put *our* hands on our fellow-men, and touch the littleness and vulgarities of their daily life. It is just that which this institution desires to do, in building for them a home. It has long appeared to me that Christianity is a true medium between those two opposite extremes, Spiritualism and Socialism. The spiritualist maintains that man may make his circumstances, and so it takes no account whatsoever of the circumstances by which the man may be surrounded; it believes that the Spirit, which is of God, may rise above those circumstances. On the other hand, it is a great maxim of Socialism that circumstances make the man. And so, the very author of Socialism tells us that, if we have efficient laws and altered social regulations, we shall have true and right men; and if we will but take away all the temptations to vice, we shall have no vice. These are the two extreme systems; Christianity does not steer the *via media* between these two extremes—no *truth* does. Christianity states the truth, by stating both extremes. It is the spirit of Christianity, that man makes his circumstances, and, besides, that the circumstances make the man. The Scriptures, interested principally with our spiritual nature, are also interested with our physical nature; and the Redeemer of the soul is declared to be the Saviour also of the body. It appears to me that the grand consummation for which all are waiting, the kingdom of Christ set up on earth, never can be established till we have reached this conviction; and all the outer and inner life must work together, until we have done all that in us lies, not only to preach and teach the truth, but to take away the hindrances which stand in the way of truth. And what is the life of the poor man in his cottage?

Before a mixed audience, I can not go deeply into the details of this. I have seen a family of nine, father and mother, grown-up sons and daughters, with but one sleeping-room, and in that sleeping-room only two beds. I will not go into the result; before a Christian assembly they are not to be named. But what is purity, what is modesty, what is the Christian Gospel preached to such a family as that? It may appear to some, that to have gone into all

these large principles is something like magniloquence; for, after all, when we speak of what we have done, we have only built apartments for ten families and seven single persons. But the rest is to come; and it is a great thing to have established a standard, to have set up before our poorer brethren a specimen of a higher and better mode of living. Political economists say the evil of the country is over-population, consequent on improvident marriages. This is partly true, but their remedy is insufficient. There is no difficulty in preventing improvident marriages among the upper classes; and for this reason—they know what comfort is—and they will not, except there is very small self-control, marry and sink in the scale of society. But the poor man often feels that he can sink no lower. Why, then, he might ask himself, should I not marry? And when this morning I saw the building in Church Street, with every window curtained, and the whole aspect so different from the buildings around, the thought suggested itself to my mind, and it must also have suggested itself to the minds of those who accompanied me: It is impossible that those who live in this locality, and look at this building, should be satisfied with the state in which they are now living. They will aspire to higher things. We are bound, every one of us, to pledge ourselves to use our best exertions to effect the prosperity of such an institution as this Society for Improving the Dwellings of the Laboring Classes.

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### A SPEECH

*In reply to an Address presented to him by One Hundred Young Men of his Congregation, at the Town Hall, Brighton, April 20, 1852.*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I should be guilty of affectation if I were to disguise the satisfaction and deep gratefulness which I feel for the Address which you have just presented me. No one can feel more deeply than I do the deficiencies, the faults, the worthlessness of the ministry of which you have spoken so kindly and so warmly. Whatever eyes have scanned those deficiencies, I will answer for it that none have scanned them so severely as my own. Others may have detected its faults more keenly, no one has felt them as bitterly as I have. And yet, for all this, I shall not for one moment disguise my belief that much of what has been said to-night is true. We have not come here to bandy compliments with one another. You have not come to flatter me; and I have not come, with any affected coyness, to pretend to disclaim your flattery in order that it may be repeated. You have told me, in the frank spirit of Englishmen, that my ministry has done you good. Frankly, as an Englishman, I tell you with all my heart, I do believe it. I know that there are men who once wandered in darkness and doubt, and could find no light, who have now found an anchor, and a rock, and resting-place. I know that there are men who were feeling bitterly and angrily what seemed to them the unfair differences of society, who now regard them in a gentler, more humble, and more tender spirit. I know that there are rich who have been led to feel more generously towards the poor. I know that there are poor who have been taught to feel more truly and more fairly towards the rich. I believe—for on such a point *God* can only *know*—that there are men who have been induced to place before themselves a higher standard, and perhaps I may venture to add, have conformed their lives more truly to that standard. I dare not hide my belief in this. I am deeply grateful in being able to say that, if my ministry were to close to-mor-

row, it would not have been, in this town at least, altogether a failure. There is no vanity in saying this. A man must be strangely constituted indeed if he can say such things, and not feel deeply humbled in remembering what that instrument is, how weak, how frail, how feeble, by which the work is done. I desire to feel this evening far less the honor that may have been done to myself, than the opportunity that is given to us for meeting together in Christian union and brotherhood. We are met here to-night, a minister of the Church of England, a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, invited by young men, of that age at which it is generally supposed that the hot blood of youth incapacitates or indisposes them towards religion. We are met here, many of those around me of the richer classes of society, invited by those who are in a humbler and far poorer class, and is it possible for me to see, in a picture such as this, merely the prominent object of myself? Is it possible for me, as a Christian, to see any thing in this—almost any thing—except a foretaste of better and happier times? A pledge of a coming time, when that shall be realized, of which that which we now see is but the representation; like the ancient *agapæ*, or feasts of charity, in which the Corinthian churches, and many other churches, exhibited before the world the blessed fact of a Church, and of a brotherhood existing here on earth. These signatures, which are appended to this Address you have given me, will be to me, I trust, in future times, in many a dark hour, a consolation and encouragement. For if I have been liable—and what public man has not—to have at times, and in certain quarters, my words misrepresented, my motives misconstrued, the whole aim and object of my teaching utterly perverted—unintentionally, I am sure—yet surely—surely—there is a rich recompense in the warm and affectionate professions of respect which you have made to me this night. Surely there is abundant overpayment, in the affectionate regard with which I have been met in Brighton, in so many personal attachments, some of the kindest and warmest of those friends being now around me, for whose presence here this evening I have to thank you graceful and touching courtesy. My young friends—my dear brethren—I had meant to say more—I had intended to briefly sketch the principles of my public teaching; but I would far rather leave what Mr. Evans has said of it, knowing it as he does, to speak for itself. Far rather than that I should speak of my own principles, I would have the decisive testimony of that young man to reply to all the misconceptions and perversions that have been uttered of my work. His words shall answer for it, whether there is Rationalism or Socialism in my teaching.

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### A SPEECH

*Delivered at the Town Hall, Brighton, November 14, 1850, at a Meeting held for the Purpose of addressing the Queen in reference to the Attempt of the Pope of Rome to parcel England out into Ecclesiastical Dioceses under Cardinal Wiseman.*

WHEN I entered this room, I had not the smallest intention of addressing the meeting; but certain expressions which have been used since my arrival seem to make it necessary. However that may be, if this were simply a question between the Church of England and the Church of Rome—if it were merely a question of precedence between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Wiseman, I should hold it purely superfluous to attend this meet-

ing. As a member of the Church of England, certainly consistently, as every dissenter will acknowledge, I hold that the Bishop of Rome has been guilty of an act of schism. It was a principle of the early Church, that every church, every kingdom, is supreme in spiritual matters within itself, and that every bishop is vested with authority in his own diocese. So far as this goes, we, the members, and especially the clergy, of the Church of England, have reason to consider ourselves aggrieved; but all that would be necessary for us to do in such a case is to do what we have done—address our bishop. We should be by no means justified in calling so large a meeting of our fellow-countrymen and fellow-townsmen, a large mass of whom are not members of the Church of England, to address the sovereign.

If this were merely a matter between Protestant and Roman Catholic in point of doctrine, I should feel that nothing more than a protest was necessary. I confess that it seems to me that to say, "We are right, and the Roman Catholics are wrong, and therefore the Roman Catholics may not proselytize because they are wrong, and we may because we are right," is a *petitio principii*, a begging of the question, an assumption of the very thing in dispute. I acknowledge that I have but very small sympathy with those intolerant controversialists who imitate the Church of Rome in thundering out anathemas against their brother Christians. I have small sympathy with those persons who are trying to arouse popular indignation against Romanism, by endeavoring to prove that the Pope of Rome is "The Man of Sin," and the Church of Rome a "Synagogue of Satan." Let there be proselytism by fair argument; let there be a fair field and no favor. Let them do what they can; and, in the name of God, we will do what we can. We do not fear Rome. Let them have fair play; we ask no more. For such questions as these, we do not require such meetings.

The ground on which I stand here, the reason on which I protest against this Papal act, is the assumption of infallibility which it contains. It is a claim by an individual man, or by a body of men, of a *right* to press on the consciences of mankind, *authoritatively*, opinions of their own. Whether that view be thundered from the Vatican, or be thundered from Exeter Hall, or come from the assumed infallibility of a private pulpit, be it Dissenting or Church of England, I believe it to be our bounden duty, as Protestants, to protest against it.

I stand forward on behalf of the right of private judgment. I would almost rather retract that expression; for the words "private judgment" have a proud sound. It seems to assume that private judgment *must* be right; that every man may judge what he will, and that, forsooth, having judged it, he, in the omnipotence of his individual judgment, must be right. I do not so understand it. A man has not a right to judge what he will; he may judge what is right; the right of private judgment is the right of judging the right. I retract the expression I used just now, and stand up on behalf of the rights of conscience—not the right of man to have what conscience he will, but the right of conscience to control the man and demand allegiance to its decrees. I protest against the Popish claim for this reason—that it is an assumption of man to dictate, in the forum of conscience, to his brother man.

There is something besides which I would rather not have said; and for that reason I entered this room intending not to say one word. There is an expression in that address to which in committee I raised an objection. It is that where we call for the remedy which justice demands for the act that has been done. I know my brother ministers meant that they demand no pains and penalties, but merely require and wish that the titles should be ignored; and yet the expression is one from which, in all freedom, I felt myself shrink. I do not like to ask the interference of the law; I do not like

to ask for protection in such a matter ; I do not like to seem to stand forward and demand that the titles of the Church of England should be preserved by forms of law—those of the Church of Rome ignored. There is something in this which appears to speak of fear and apprehension. In my heart of hearts, I have no apprehension of the progress of the Church of Rome. Let men say what they will ; let them number up the chapels that have increased—I grant that there has been an increase ; but what if it be that a few hundred ladies have been embroidering altar-cloths, and a few hundred of the aristocracy, unable to keep their own consciences, and not daring to go into the awful question, “What is truth ?” have chosen, like children afraid of the dark, to go back to their mothers’ aprons, and throw themselves on Papal infallibility ? What if a few soft, sentimental clergymen have gone to Rome ? What then, has *that* touched the great, clear, sturdy English heart ? When once this question of Romanism, or Tractarianism, or semi-Romanism has been placed before the mass of the country, there has never been a moment of hesitation ; it has been met by stern rejection. And, therefore, Mr. Chairman, acknowledging the rightful meaning of the words, and perfectly prepared to sign that memorial, I should rather have rejoiced if we had been contented with a simple protest.

A few words on the matter with which the last speaker concluded, and I have done. It seems to me that he is under some misapprehension with respect to that expression—“spiritual supremacy.” He objects to it, if I understand him, on the supposition that it gives to the sovereign spiritual jurisdiction—the right of doing spiritual acts. The sovereign of England does no spiritual act whatsoever. She does not ordain ministers ; she does nothing with regard to the administration of the sacraments ; she does not create one single doctrine. There seems to be a certain misapprehension in respect of the very meaning of the ground on which this was originally proposed. The speaker dwelt much on the authority and rights of the people—the supremacy of the people. He spoke of the people as the fountain source of all power, spiritually, probably, as well as temporally. Is that gentleman aware that the great defender of this doctrine of royal supremacy in matters ecclesiastical—for that is the real meaning here of spiritual—did uphold that the people are the rightful sources of all spiritual authority ? God has delegated to his Church, to the mass of believers, a right to govern themselves according to Scripture and Truth, but as a matter of order, not in heaven, but here on earth, it became necessary for the country—that is, the Christian community at large—for in those days the Church was the country and the country the Church—that the country should delegate to one individual all its sovereignty ; and the sovereign now speaks spiritually, speaks ecclesiastically, only as the delegate and voice of the sovereign community of the Church of Christ.

THE END.











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